FBIS **DAILY REPORT**

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

25 MARCH 1987

Iran and the Gulf

There is nothing genuine about the U.S. "hue and cry" over Iran's deployment of land-based antiship missiles near the Strait of Hormuz, Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani declared in an interview broadcast by Tehran radio. He said the Iranians do not know why the United States is raising this issue now because Iran has deployed such missiles on its coast for a long time, and if the Americans did not know this until now, "this is a sign of their excessive weakness." Noting that Iran recently rejected a U.S. warning on the missile issue, the Majlis speaker contended that the United States has "no legitimate presence" in the Gulf, while Iran is "more interested in the security of the Strait of Hormuz than others." If Iran wanted to close the Strait it would not need missiles as artillery would be sufficient, he added.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani also denied reports that Iran has put two listening stations at the disposal of the Soviet Union in exchange for 200 Soviet missiles, viewing this as an "insinuation by the imperialists." Neither the Soviet Union nor any other foreign power has "even the smallest center" or facility in Iran, he said, and Iran has "no need" for Soviet missiles as "we have been a missile power in the region for a long time."

In another development, the head of Iran's delegation to a UN conference on atomic power warned that a military strike against Iran's unfinished reactor at Bushehr could have "the same radioactive consequences" as the accident at Chernobyl, AFP reported. The Iranian official disclosed that "nuclear matter" is stockpiled at the plant.

Chadian Conflict

Chadian forces killed 1,269 Libyans and took 438 prisoners during the capture of Ouadi Doum 22 March, according to a Chadian military communique carried by Ndjamena radio. On the Chadian side only 29 soldiers were reported killed and 58 wounded. Among the weapons captured at Ouadi Doum were 11 L-39 bombers, 12 T-62 and 42 T-55 tanks, and 12 SAM-6 and 4 SAM-10 batteries, the communique said. The army also reported equipment destroyed, which included 2 TU-22 bombers, 1 MiG-21, and 47 T-55 tanks.

According to Tripoli television, however, GUNT forces "crushed" the attack on Ouadi Doum. Reports on the "imaginary victories" are part of a "vindictive and heated propaganda campaign" by the media against GUNT, the television said.

In continued fighting, GUNT claimed its commandos "infiltrated south of the 16th parallel" and attacked Iriba District on 23 March, AFP reported citing the GUNT foreign minister. The assault killed 25 Chadian soldiers, the minister said, adding that clashes continue in the Ouadi Doum area.

Meanwhile, JANA's political editor claimed that France has violated its promises and is fighting north of the 16th parallel. The action is in line with a "secret agreement" with Hissein Habre to "liberate" northern Chad, the editor maintained.

DRA-Pakistan

Pakistan lodged a "strong" protest with the Afghan charge over the DRA's 23 March "deliberately provocative attacks" on Kurram and Waziristan Agencies, Karachi radio reported.

On the other hand, Haji Mohammad Chamkani, president of the DRA Revolutionary Council Presidium, greeted President Ziaul Haq on Pakistan's national day, Kabul radio reported. Chamkani sent "warm congratulations" and expressed "hope for the future development of bilateral relations," the radio disclosed.

Lebanon

Hostages — The Organization of Revolutionary Justice announced that it has not postponed or cancelled the "death sentence" on French hostage Jean-Louis Normandin, who is currently being tried for a second time. The ORJ issued this information in a communique to a local newspaper, accompanied by a photograph of Normandin, AFP reported. Meanwhile, the UAE paper *Al-Khalij* cited claims that the Syrians have located the whereabouts of the four hostages kidnapped 24 January and are planning to release them before the end of March, QNA noted.

Attacks on SLA — The SLA repelled "a large terrorist offensive" in the Jabal al-Safhah area of southeastern Lebanon 24 March, IDF radio reported. Beirut radio stated that Lebanese resistance fighters killed over 15 "enemy agents" in an attack at Yarin, a southwestern village near the Israeli border.

Algeria

House Arrest Lifted — At least 22 persons, including a former minister under President Ahmed Ben Bella, were released from house arrest on 24 March, Paris radio reported. The move follows an appeal to President Chadli Bendjedid by leading lawyers, AFP noted.

Agreement With Spain — Spain and Algeria have affirmed they will not allow activity on their territory which might threaten the security of either country, Madrid radio reported citing official Spanish sources. Algeria will not become a sanctuary for ETA members and in exchange Spain will "keep checks" on Algerian opposition members who support Ben Bella, the radio said.

Saudi King's UK Visit

King Fahd urged the United Kingdom to take a more positive role in finding a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue, London *Press Association* disclosed in a report on the Saudi ruler's banquet speech at Buckingham Palace.

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PNC Speaker Issues Statement on Next PNC Session

LD241954 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1702 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] PNC Speaker 'Abd al-Ahmid al-Sa'ih made the following statement this morning:

Relying upon God Almighty, in accordance with the provisions of the Palestinian National Charter and the statute and its internal regulations, and following the approval of His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid, whom we thank for hosting the session of the National Council in the capital of sister Algeria, it has been decided to hold the 18th session of the PNC during the morning of April 20, 1987, because of recent events and the current situation prevailing in the Arab region, and because of the international situation. We call on all members to attend the PNC sessions.

May God grant us success.

Signed: 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, speaker of the Palestinian National Council

Hawatimah Comments on Palestinian Agreement

JN251107 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1000 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] In Tripoli, Libya, DFLP Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah has asserted that the political and organizational paper agreed upon by six Palestinian factions with the participation of [PNSF leader] Khalid al-Fahum, under the sponsorship of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, constitutes a sound basis for a political dialogue to regain PLO unity. He said the failure of any Palestinian faction to participate in the dialogue will render the future of the working paper precarious.

Qaddumi: UN Resolutions Not Basis for Conference

JN241925 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic
1810 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Brother Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO Political Department, has reiterated the PLO's refusal to recognize UN Security Council Resolutions Nos 242 and 338 as bases for an international peace conference on the Middle East. In a statement to the press published in Abu Dhabi yesterday, he said an international conference can be convened only on the basis of the UN resolutions concerning the Palestine question and the Middle East issue, stressing the need for PLO participation in an independent delegation on an equal footing with other parties.

Abu Nidal Group Executes Two Jordanian 'Agents'

NC250650 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic
0545 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] The Abu Nidal group announced in a statement in Sidon last night that it had carried out the death sentence against two people in one of its bases in Jordan at the beginning of this month. The group pointed out they were Jordanian secret agents and were executed in response to the assassination of an Abu Nidal member. Attached to the statement were photos of the two people killed. The statement pointed out that the Jordanian authorities can receive the two bodies through the International Red Cross Organization.

Arabsat Official on Debt Problem, Plans

LD241104 Kuwait KUNA in English 0841 GMT 24 Mar 87

[By Mahboub al Amer]

[Text] Kuwait, March 24 (KUNA) — The Arab Satellite Corporation (Arabsat) is indebted by 80 million dollars, Arabsat's director General Abdul Qader al-Ba'airi revealed today.

In an exclusive interview with KUNA during his current stay in Kuwait, Ba'airi added that Arabsat was previously burdened with 100 million dollars debts and it is working now to reduce this amount.

On solutions drawn up by the corporation to reduce the foreign debts, the Arabsat official said that they include increasing the utilization of the Arabsat to increase the corporation's income, noting that Arabsat has allowed the private sector to benefit from the Arabsat and an agreement was signed with an Arab company to rent six channels for five years with an amount of 40 million dollars.

Ba'airi said that the corporation reached a tentative agreement with creditor companies to reschedule Arabsat's debts over a period of five years.

He said that the expected revenues of Arabsat until 1992 will enable the corporation to cover all its debts and also the costs of the annual operational process.

Arabsat's main goals is to convert the modern technology to Arab states, set up communications networks that link all Arab countries and to encourage Arab industry in the field of satellites, Ba'airi said, and added that the corporation was able to accomplish the space network that serves all Arab states.

The Arabsat director general said there are 14 Arab ground stations that link all the Arab world, noting that three Arab stations will be opened this year in Syria, Libya and Somalia while the rest of the Arab countries' stations will be ready next year.

He noted that there are 40 Arab technicians and engineers who are trained to operate the satellites.

Meanwhile, the official said that Israel's threats directed against Arabsat, before it was launched, have been futile.

On issues to be discussed by the General Assembly of the Arab Satellite Corporation, to be held in Libya next April, Ba'airi said the major item on the agenda is the Arabsat's debts.

BAHRAIN

Amir Receives Iraqi Minister, Saddam Message

JN241747 Doha QNA in Arabic 1310 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Manama, 24 Mar (QNA) — His Highness Shaykh 'Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, has received a message from Iraqi President Saddam Husayn on bilateral relations and current regional developments.

WAKH said Iraqi Culture and Information Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim conveyed the message during a meeting with the amir today.

The Iraqi minister is visiting Bahrain to attend the meetings of the Arab Gulf information ministers to begin here later today.

KUWAIT

Beirut Statements Threaten Violence Against Kuwait

NC250706 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Two statements that were distributed in Beirut yesterday threatened to employ violence against Kuwait in retaliation for the Kuwaiti authorities' oppression and use of force.

The first statement, signed by Hizballah Kuwait [Hizballah al-Kuwait], accused the Kuwaiti authorities of malicious intent toward Islam and denounced their support for Iraq in the Gulf war.

The second statement, signed by Scholar 'Abbas al-Mahri, Imam Khomeyni's representative in Kuwait, accused the Kuwaiti authorities or practicing terrorism and detaining women and defenseless people.

AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM on U.S. Role in Gulf Security

LD250914 Kuwait KUNA in English 0800 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Kuwait, March 25 (KUNA) — Local daily *"Al-Ra'y Al-'Amm"* Wednesday described as "wrong and dreamy" U.S. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger's statement, offering to escort ships in the Gulf, if it receives an open invitation to do so.

In a front page editorial the paper said that the security of the Gulf is the responsibility of its people, who are quite capable of defending it, and affirmed that such an invitation will never be extended to the U.S.

"The region is keen to stay away from international rivalry, and challenges" it pointed out.

"Al-Ra'y Al-'Amm" questioned the United States' seriousness in ending the Gulf war, and said that part of Washington's credibility can be only restored when the U.S. earnestly shoulders its international responsibility to end the war.

However, the paper reiterated that the U.S. stances and initiatives even after the U.S. secret arms shipments to Iran was revealed, and indicated that the U.S. has always ignored the efforts which are being exerted to put an end to that bloody war.

USSR Envoy Supports Unrestricted Gulf Shipping

LD241341 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1222 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Kuwait 24 Mar (KUNA) — Soviet Ambassador to Kuwait Ernest Zverev today announced his country's support for the freedom of shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and the Arab Gulf.

Ambassador Zverev told KUNA today after his meeting with Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Sulayman Majid al-Shahin that "the Soviet Union cannot support or welcome any measures or acts that would lead to an escalation of tension in this vital region of the world."

He added: "We support the freedom of shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and in the Arab Gulf," adding that during the meeting with Mr al-Shahin he had discussed the development of the situation in the region in the light of the continuing Iraq-Iran war, in addition to bilateral relations.

In a reply to a question on whether the issue of the deployment of Iranian antiship missiles near the Strait of Hormuz had been discussed, the ambassador said that this subject "had been discussed within the framework of the issues in question."

Regarding the problem of the Middle East and the contacts for the convening of a UN-sponsored international conference he said: "There is nothing new in this respect."

Reportage on Visit of SFRY Defense Minister

Arrives for Talks

LD221527 Kuwait KUNA in English 1410 GMT 22 Mar 87

[Text] Kuwait, March 22 (KUNA) -- Yugoslav Defence Minister Admiral Branko Mamula arrived here Sunday afternoon for talks with his Kuwaiti opposite number Shaykh Salim al-Sabah on military cooperation between the two countries and the situation in the Gulf region.

On arrival, Mamula and his accompanying delegation were received by Shaykh Salim, Defence Under Secretary Faysal al-Dawud, Assistant Chief of Staff for Military Operations Department Brigadier Jabir al-Khalid Al Sabah and a number of senior officers.

During his visit, the Yugoslav minister will meet with H.H. the amir, H.H. the crown prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim Al Sabah and deputy premier and premier and prime minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad. He will also visit a number of Kuwaiti military camps within the frame of his visit's programme.

Before leaving his country earlier today for Kuwait, Mamula told KUNA that he sees a room for greater cooperation between Kuwait and Yugoslavia.

Mamula's visit to Kuwait comes in response to an invitation from Shaykh Salim who visited Yugoslavia last October.

Meets With Defense Minister

LD231603 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1248 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Kuwait, 23 Mar (KUNA) — Fleet Admiral General Mamula Branko, Yugoslav Federal Secretary for National Defense, met here today with his Kuwaiti counterpart, Shaykh Salim al-Sabah.

The two men discussed military cooperation between their two countries during the meeting, which was attended by the assistant chief of general staff for military operations, Staff Colonel Jabir Khalid al-Ahmad, and Defense Ministry Under Secretary Faysal al-Dawud.

Later, Shaykh Salim hosted a luncheon in honor of his guest and members of his delegation at the military academy.

Amir Receives Message From Bulgarian President

LD241140 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1002 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Kuwait, 24 Mar (KUNA) — Engels Manchev, the Bulgarian ambassador here, handed over a message to Khalid al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the minister of the Amiri Office, from Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov to Amir of Kuwait Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah. Nothing is known so far about the contents of the message.

Army Chief Leaves for Oman, GCC Project

LD221442 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 22 Mar 87

[Text] Major General Mizyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-San'i, chief of the Army General Staff, left Kuwait today at the head of a military delegation for the Sultanate of Oman to inspect the final project of the Al-Jazirah Shield Force.

The project will be attended by chiefs of staffs of the GCC armies and their training and operations officers.

Oil Official Details Proposed Market Expansion

LD211109 Kuwait KUNA in English 1000 GMT 21 Mar 87

[By Shamil Khayri]

[Text] Kuwait, March 21 (KUNA) — A ranking Kuwaiti oil official Saturday announced that Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) intends to go ahead in looking for expanding its marketing network abroad to include European and other countries with the aim of securing permanent markets for Kuwaiti petroleum products.

Board Chairman of Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) Nadir Sutlan told *Kuwait News Agency* (KUNA) that KPC is seeking to find new opportunities for taking over fuel stations and other petroleum installations in other European countries than the current seven states in which Kuwait is possessing oil facilities in addition to South East Asian countries.

Since 1983, the KPC has made giant steps toward securing long-term outlets for its petroleum products after the current stations in Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden, Denmark, Italy and Britain proved to be a success. KPC has set up seven local companies in those seven countries to carry out the marketing operations, and established the KPI-based in London, to coordinate among those companies and to supervise the marketing of the KPC products abroad.

Deputy Board Chairman of KPI Nasir al-Salim told KUNA that the foreign petroleum companies aim at material profits out of buying oil installations in the world, but the KPC is doing so due to its responsibilities toward Kuwait and toward bolstering the state budget through realizing the maximum revenues from oil and finding marketing outlets.

Al-Salim added that the marketing network of the KPC is currently distributing and marketing more than 240,000 barrels a day in the form of oil products through the outlets it is having, though the Gulf oil war marketing totals no more than 107,000 barrels a day from those outlets it was possessing.

Al-Salim said the corporation has started in 1985 a big project in Holland's refinery so as to be able to receive giant oil tankers of 290,000 tons and disclosed that work in this project is expected to be completed next month. The project includes, according to the KPI official, constructing a big loading terminal in addition to introducing major changes in the storage facilities of the refinery to enable the KPC's tankers to unload the oil products of Kuwaiti refineries so as to be stored, then distributed to the outlets which the corporation is having in Europe.

Al-Salim said that the company's research center in Holland has completed a plan to develop a large group of lubricating oils in conformity with world specifications. These oils, added Al-Salim, estimated over 100 in type, have outdone those produced by the Shell and Gulf.

In 1985, the company took the initiative in developing the market strategy in Europe by producing gas with an octane percentage of 95. The lead-free gas was marketed in Europe under the commercial code of 2085, indicating that the quality will be sold for the next hundred years.

Al-Salim said the KPI is supplying airplane fuel to airports of the seven European countries, in addition to the airports of New York, the Gulf of Mexico and Hong Kong. He disclosed that the company will soon start supplying airplane fuel to Heathrow and Gatwick Airports in London.

Referring to the strong competition in the European markets of oil products, Al-Salim said the KPI is consolidating its presence in those markets through a policy that calls for the European citizen good quality of products, and this was the success realized by the company.

OMAN

State Minister Leaves for Visit to Pakistan
JN241535 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Yusuf al-'Alawi 'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, has left with a delegation for Pakistan on an official visit scheduled to last several days.

In a predeparture statement to our correspondent, the minister said the Sultanate and Pakistan have the closest of relations. His majesty the sultan therefore makes a point of keeping in constant touch with President General Mohammad Ziaul Haq, he added.

The minister said his majesty asked him to convey a verbal message to the Pakistani president on bilateral ties and the Sultanate's views on regional and international issues of concern to both sides.

The delegation accompanying the minister includes Salim ibn Muhammad al-Ghilani, head of the Asia desk at the Foreign Ministry.

On hand to see the minister off at the airport were the Pakistani ambassador in Muscat and the chief of protocol at the Foreign Ministry.

Comments on Iranian Missiles
JN241853 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1805 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Muscat, 24 Mar (WAKH) — The Sultanate of Oman has reiterated its eagerness to make the Strait of Hormuz an area of cooperation among all interested parties, particularly countries which have a direct interest in using the waterway as well as the littoral states.

In a statement before leaving Muscat for Pakistan, Yusuf al-'Alawi 'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, answered a question on Iran's recent deployment of missiles near the Strait of Hormuz as follows: We are holding (?close contacts) with all parties in the region, particularly Iran.

Al-'Alawi said he does not believe Iran would now embark on any military measures to undermine navigation or to close the Strait.

He expressed hope that navigation in the Arab Gulf, particularly in the Strait of Hormuz, would remain safe and secure.

On his visit to Pakistan, the Omani minister said he will convey a verbal message from Sultan Qabus to Pakistani President Muhammad Ziaul Haq on bilateral relations and ways to develop them.

QATAR

PDRY President Arrives for Official Visit
JN231930 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1748 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Doha, 23 Mar (WAKH) — PDRY President Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas arrived in Doha this evening for a 3-day official visit to Qatar as part of his tour of a number of regional countries.

The PDRY president was received on arrival by His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Hamad Al Thani, amir of the State of Qatar; His Highness Shaykh Hamad ibn Khalifah Al Thani, heir apparent and defense minister; and a number of senior Qatari officials.

During the visit, President al-'Attas will hold talks with his highness the amir of Qatar and senior officials on ways to promote bilateral relations in various areas, on conditions in the Arab world, and on issues of common interest.

In a statement following his arrival, the PDRY president expressed hope that his visit to Qatar would contribute to promoting relations between the two countries. The PDRY president also pointed out that his talks with Qatari officials will center on bilateral relations and Arab situations to serve both countries' interests as well as regional stability and security.

President al-'Attas began his tour of the region the day before yesterday with a visit to the UAE during which he held talks with His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the UAE.

Received by Amir
JN241610 Doha QNA in Arabic 1245 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Doha, 24 Mar (QNA) — His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Hamad Al Thani, amir of the State of Qatar, received this morning Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, chairman of the PDRY Supreme People's Council Presidium, who is currently visiting Doha within the framework of a tour of countries in the region.

The talks were attended on the Qatari side by His Highness Shaykh Hamad ibn Khalifah Al Thani, minister of defense. On the PDRY side, the talks were attended by members of the delegation accompanying Chairman al-'Attas.

During the meeting they discussed the situation in the region and reviewed the latest developments in Arab and Islamic arenas as well as ways to achieve Arab solidarity. They also discussed enhancing and bolstering bilateral cooperation in the interests of the two fraternal peoples.

Discusses YAR, Foreign Issues
JN241606 Mamama WAKH in Arabic 0545 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Doha, 23 Mar (WAKH) — Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, chairman of the PDRY Supreme People's Council Presidium, has emphasized his country's eagerness to prevent any negative effects on its relations with the YAR as a result of the 13 January incidents last year, considering what happened at that time an internal issue concerning his country alone.

In a statement to Doha QNA tonight, Chairman al-'Attas said his country has been cooperating with the YAR since the PDRY issued the amnesty resolution allowing refugees to return home from their camps in the north [the YAR] so they could join their families and return to the homeland to exercise all their rights after being granted all guarantees of security, work, and constitutional and legal rights. He emphasized that the PDRY is eager to tackle this issue with the brothers in the north so it will not negatively affect the two countries' unionist march. At the same time, he emphasized the desire and eagerness of the two fraternal countries' peoples to continue this march to secure a stable future.

The PDRY chairman noted that no extraordinary trials of the officials responsible for the 13 January incidents have been held. He added that it was left up to the Republic's Higher Court to decide on these incidents, while the defendants were provided with all means of defense. He said the official agencies in his country are doing their utmost to end these trials as soon as possible.

The PDRY chairman said that 5,000 people were arrested when the incidents began, adding that all detainees with the exception of 200 have been released since the amnesty resolution. As for those 200 detainees, preparations and arrangements for releasing them are under way. He said 96 people inside the PDRY and 48 others outside have been named as responsible for these incidents.

Al-'Attas denied the existence of any mediation efforts between his country's current and former leaders and said the former leadership ceased to exist when it carried out actions in violation of the country's democratic legitimacy. He added that the Kuwaiti mediation efforts and the consultations and discussions held with Kuwaiti officials were to secure the return of refugees and draw up guarantees for their return which has been made possible by the general amnesty resolution. He emphasized Kuwait has been exerting continuous efforts in this regard. He also noted that meetings with the brothers in the north have also continued to achieve this objective in accordance with guarantees being provided by his country.

The PDRY chairman emphasized that the situation in his country is under the complete control of the party and government after the defeat of the conspiracy that sought to wreck the people's unity, development, and progress and which resulted in the country's loss of many of its cadres and leaders. He denied there were any pockets of rebellion in any governorate, saying the economic, social, and political situation are back to normal once again. He said, however, that operations involving infiltration of personnel and weapons were recently discovered. But, Al-'Attas added, the elements which infiltrated the country surrendered to the security forces, thanks to the citizens' awareness.

On relations with the Sultanate of Oman, the PDRY chairman emphasized that the leaders of the two fraternal countries are eager to continue working to improve these relations on the basis of good neighborliness, mutual respect, and noninterference in internal affairs as outlined in the statement of principles signed by both countries in 1982. He added: On the basis of these principles which the two sides have been working to entrench and solidify, we look forward to achieving further constructive bilateral cooperation. Both countries are continuing efforts to enhance existing relations in the service of the common interests of all countries and peoples of the region and to contribute to bolstering security and stability in the area.

Al-'Attas said his country's relations with the Soviet Union are excellent and added these relations were enhanced after the recent visit to Moscow by 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the YSP Central Committee. This trip, he added, further advanced the bilateral ties of cooperation and friendship. He paid tribute to the efforts being exerted by the Soviet Union to help develop his country and its support for Arab countries' issues and interests in international fora.

The PDRY chairman revealed that Ethiopia returned some planes and ships to the PDRY that had been used by the perpetrators of the bloody incidents in his country. He said that PDRY-Ethiopia relations have continued to improve since Ethiopia displayed an understanding of what really happened in the PDRY, adding that these relations must not be affected by the departure of individuals.

Concluding his statement, PDRY Chairman al-'Attas emphasized the strength of relations binding his country to the State of Qatar. He also expressed hope these relations between the two fraternal peoples who are bound by history and common fate would develop in all spheres.

He also expressed the hope that relations with the GCC states which are bound to his country by fraternal sentiments would be further cemented and bolstered.

Departs Doha 25 Mar

JN250817 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0740 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Doha, 25 Mar (WAKH) — PDRY President Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas left Doha this morning at the end of an official 3-day visit to Qatar as part of his current tour of the region.

The PDRY leader was accorded an official farewell at Doha International Airport. His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Hamad Al Thani, the amir of Qatar; His Highness Shaykh Hamad ibn Khalifah Al Thani, the heir apparent; and senior military and civilian officials saw him off at the airport.

In a statement before departure, President al-'Attas expressed deep satisfaction with the results of his visit and the warm welcome he received. He said: This was an opportunity for us to discuss bilateral cooperation in all the economic, trade, cultural, and other fields. We also reviewed the Arab and international situation and issues of mutual concern. He said that the talks were held in a brotherly, cordial atmosphere. He added: We believe that this visit paved the way for comprehensive future cooperation among the fraternal countries and for the benefit and stability of the region.

Concluding his statement, President al-'Attas praised the development and achievements of Qatar in all fields under His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Hamad Al Thani, the amir of Qatar. President al-'Attas arrived here the day before yesterday.

SAUDI ARABIA

King Fahd Departs for Official 4-Day Visit to UK

For reportage of King Fahd's official visit to the UK, see the United Kingdom section of the 24 March Western Europe *Daily Report* and subsequent issues.

Deputy Prime Minister Receives UAE Official

LD242258 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpt] His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, viceroy of the custodian of the two holy mosques, this afternoon received at his office in the Royal Court Shaykh Hamadan ibn Zayid Al Nuhayyan, UAE Foreign Ministry under secretary, who conveyed to his highness a written message for King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, from his brother UAE President His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan. [passage omitted]

Guinean President Arrives for Pilgrimage

LD231240 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1120 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Excerpt] Jeddah, 23 Mar (SPA) — Guinean President General Lansana Conte arrived in Jeddah at 1230 today from Kuwait on a pilgrimage to the Kingdom. [passage omitted]

Departs 24 Mar

LD240941 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0802 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpt] Jeddah, 24 Mar (SPA) — His Excellency General Lansana Conte, the Guinean president, left Jeddah today heading for home after a visit to the Kingdom for the minor pilgrimage. [passage omitted]

UAE

Reportage on Visit of French Foreign Minister

Arrives 23 Mar

JN231139 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0735 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Mar (WAKH) — French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond arrived in Abu Dhabi from Muscat this morning on a 2-day visit to the UAE.

During the visit, the French minister will hold talks with senior UAE officials on current regional developments, with emphasis on the Iraq-Iran war. He will also discuss with UAE officials the Middle East issue and the EC countries' possible contribution to efforts aimed at convening an international peace conference. He will also examine the developing relations between the UAE and France.

The French foreign minister was received at the airport by Rashid 'Abdallah, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs; a number of officials; and Jubert Colin de la Verdiere, the French ambassador to the UAE.

Received by President

JN231144 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0858 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Mar (WAKH) — His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, the UAE president, this morning received French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond, who is currently visiting the UAE.

The meeting was attended by Shaykh Surur ibn Muhammad, the chief of the UAE presidential court; Rashid 'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs; Shaykh Sultan ibn Zayyid; and Jubert Colin de la Verdiere, the French ambassador to the UAE.

Confers With Officials

JN231314 Doha QNA in Arabic 1125 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Mar (QNA) — His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, the UAE president, has called on France to continue to follow a fair and unbiased policy to support the issues of truth and justice in the world.

During a meeting with French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond, who is currently visiting the UAE, his highness said that the Arab world appreciates France's efforts to achieve peace and security in the world, maintaining the position it occupies in the Middle East. His Highness Shaykh Zayid called on the EC to embark on persistent efforts to contribute to achieving peace in the Middle East and the Gulf area. He also praised the French stand within the EC.

A UAE official source said that the meeting included a review of the situation in the region in light of developments in the Iraq-Iran war and the situation in the Middle East. The talks also focused on ways to strengthen the existing relations of cooperation between the two countries.

Concluding his statement, the UAE source noted that the French minister used the meeting to convey a message from French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac to Shaykh Zayid on bilateral cooperation and issues of common interest.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid 'Abdallah later held a round of talks with Jean-Bernard Raimond focusing on the current issues in the Gulf and Arab arenas, particularly the Iraq-Iran war, the Middle East crisis, and the part EC countries are expected to play in contributing to efforts aimed at convening an international peace conference in light of the Brussels statement.

The talks also dealt with the Arab-European dialogue, GCC-European dialogue, and with developing and strengthening the existing cooperation between the two countries in all fields.

Ya'qub al-Kindi, chief of the Foreign Ministry's foreign affairs desk, stated after the meeting that the two officials reviewed the most important international and regional issues, particularly the Iraq-Iran war, the situation in the Gulf area, the Palestinian and Middle East issues, and the situation in Lebanon in addition to bilateral relations.

Al-Kindi said that the French minister explained his country's efforts, within the framework of the EC, to convene an international peace conference. He affirmed that his country is interested in establishing a committee to make preparations for the international conference. He expressed his country's approval of convening an international conference, noting France's great efforts to convince other countries of the international conference idea.

Al-Kindi said that during the meeting both sides expressed their concern over the continuation of the Iraq-Iran war and affirmed the need to stop the fighting and resort to dialogue in order to peacefully resolve the conflict.

Holds News Conference

JN241134 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0530 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Mar (WAKH) — French Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond described the issue of the Iranian missiles reportedly deployed near the Strait of Hormuz as one of concern to France and the region.

In the news conference which he held in Abu Dhabi yesterday evening, the French minister declined to comment on the issue, stating only that France, like all countries, is interested in guaranteeing the freedom of navigation in international waterways in accordance with international law.

Raimond said that the negotiations which were recently held between France and Iran made some progress after France repaid to Iran $330 million of the $1 billion loan which was granted to France during the rule of the late shah.

He emphasized that his country's relations with Iran will not change French policy vis-a-vis the Gulf and the Arab world. He added that these relations will not affect France's relations with Iraq either.

The French minister described his country's relations with the UAE as broad and solid and added that the UAE is a strong and important partner of France, emphasizing his country's readiness to fully cooperate with the UAE in the field of technology.

Raimond expressed France's support for the idea of an international peace conference on the Middle East conflict, indicating that Paris backed the Soviet proposal, which called for a preparatory committee to meet to arrange the international conference. He added that France is currently holding contacts with Jordan on this issue.

With regard to Lebanon, the French minister said that France would like to see peace there and realizes the importance of achieving accord and reconciliation among the Lebanese.

He also indicated that the arms embargo imposed by the French Government on Syria is still valid.

On France's position toward the Western Sahara, Raimond said that France maintains a neutral stand on this issue, which is being debated at the UN. He said his government supports any solution that may be reached to resolve this problem and added that it also supports the idea of applying the right of self-determination in relation to the Western Sahara conflict.

The French minister denied knowledge of information pertaining to an Algerian mediation effort between Libya and Chad and said that Paris wants to see the Chadian conflict resolved on the basis of noninterference in Chad's internal affairs.

Concludes Visit 24 Mar

JN240856 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0600 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 24 Mar (WAKH) — French Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond left Abu Dhabi for home this morning following a short visit to the UAE at the end of a tour of the region, which included the Sultanate of Oman.

During his stay, the French minister held talks with UAE officials on regional issues, topics related to current Arab and international issues, and the ties of cooperation between the UAE and France.

PDRY's Al-'Attas Continues Talks With President

JN231614 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1450 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Mar (WAKH) — His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the UAE, held a meeting with PDRY President Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas here this afternoon. The meeting was attended by Shaykh Khalifah ibn Zayid, heir apparent and deputy commander in chief of the UAE Armed Forces.

During the meeting the two leaders resumed talks on issues of mutual interest discussed during their expanded meeting yesterday. They also touched on ways to promote joint cooperation and examined current developments in both Arab and international arenas.

Foreign Minister Leaves for Morocco With Message

JN241701 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0845 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 24 Mar (WAKH) — Rashid 'Abdallah, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, left Abu Dhabi today for Fes at the start of a visit to Morocco. Rashid 'Abdallah is carrying a message from UAE President His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan to Moroccan King Hassan II.

PDRY

Political Bureau Briefed on June Party Conference

EA231112 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic
1630 GMT 22 Mar 87

[Text] At a session today under the chairmanship of Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, general secretary of the YSP Central Committee, the YSP Political Bureau was briefed on the preparations and organizational measures for the general party conference, which will be held this June in accordance with the resolution passed by the Central Committee at its fourth session in 1986.

The Political Bureau also approved the formation of a preparatory committee under the chairmanship of the brother general secretary, an organizing and administrative committee, and an information committee.

The Political Bureau was also briefed on the work methods for new cadres as submitted by the committee appointed by the Political Bureau in accordance with the Central Committee resolution, and made a decision to refer it to leading party and government bodies for discussion in order to establish a carefully studied integrated system.

The YSP Central Committee Political Bureau was also briefed on the report submitted by the brother general secretary on the results of his visit to Hadramut Governorate, and the meetings he held there with each of the two secretariats of the party organization and the executive office of the people's local council, the different party and government institutions, the agricultural and fisheries cooperatives, and the workers at the agricultural equipment [words indistinct] station and the Yemeni-Soviet projects. The Political Bureau decided to refer the decisions reached during the visit to the relevant quarters for action.

The YSP Central Committee Political Bureau was also informed of the official and friendly visit which Brother Dr Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Council of Ministers, made to the PRC, which contributed to reinforcing the continued relations between the two friendly countries and peoples.

The Political Bureau expressed its pleasure with the visit's positive results, the reports of which were passed on to the relevant quarters for action.

Energy Cooperation Discussed With Soviet Officials

EA222106 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic
2030 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Excerpt] Agreement has been reached on the participation of Soviet experts in drawing up a general plan for the development of energy in Democratic Yemen.

This was agreed during the fifth session of the subcommittee for energy affairs of the Permanent Committee for Economic and Technical Cooperation between our country and the Soviet Union, which concluded its work in Aden today.

During the session, which was chaired on the Yemeni side by Brother Mahmud Muhammad Tarmum, deputy minister of energy and minerals, and on the Soviet side by Comrade Aleksandr Iordanskiy, deputy minister of power and electrification [name and title as heard] in the Soviet Union, the two sides also discussed questions concerning progress in the building of a thermal power station in our country with a capacity of 135 megawatts and water desalinization units with an overall output of 42,000 cubic meters of fresh water, which will operate 24 hours a day, as well as forming qualified technical cadres. [passage omitted]

Sectarian Riots Lead to Curfew in Sawhaj 23 Mar

NC250956 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Mar 87 p 1

[Text] Cairo — *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* office — Tension rose again in Sawhaj yesterday when a Coptic tailor shop, known as the Paris Workshop, was set on fire. Major General Samir Sa'id, assistant interior minister and security chief for Sawhaj, imposed a curfew on the town last night and strengthened security in all stores and places of worship.

Meanwhile, the governorate's security forces continued to arrest members of religious groups who took part in Friday's events. They detained 18 people, including a doctor from the Sawhaj General Hospital, pushing the number of suspects detained thus far to 40. These individuals are being kept in custody for 15 days on charges of assaulting police officers.

During Friday's incidents, 11 members of the police and central security forces were wounded, including a major general, a colonel, two lieutenant colonels, three majors, four first lieutenants, and nine officers. Some of them are in critical condition and are in Sawhaj Hospital's intensive care unit.

Interior Minister Maj Gen Zaki Badr has issued specific orders to his subordinates in the ministry and to chief security officers in Upper Egypt to tighten security around shops and public places and to keep members of extremist groups under surveillance. He gave them sufficient powers to deal with any disturbance or rioting.

According to well-informed security sources, the Interior Ministry has decided to reinforce special and central security units in all the governorates and cities of Upper Egypt, and to step up security in key areas and near places of worship to prevent extremists from rioting or committing any acts of sabotage.

The Egyptian security forces have also decided to place their personnel on alert every Friday, as riots in the mosques have taken place on that day for 2 weeks running. The authorities have emphasized that stiff measures will be taken against rioters to make examples of them. The security forces, who are now on the lookout for Communists and religious extremists, intend to use all the powers of the emergency laws at their disposal.

Al-Azhar Rector Comments

JN230820 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 19 Mar 87 pp 2,3,9

[Interview with Shaykh Jad al-Haq 'Ali Jad al-Haq, rector of Al-Azhar University, by reporters Mahfuz al-Ansari and 'Abd al-Latif Fayid in Cairo — date not given]

[Excerpts] [Question] Acts of sedition occasionally occur under the cover of religion to dismember the homeland and tamper with its fate. Your Eminence, to what do you attribute this phenomenon? Is it of our own making or is it of alien origin?

[Jad al-Haq] I believe colonialism and the countries that occupied the Islamic Arab East are still pulling some strings. World Zionism, in cooperation with imperialism, continues to fragment the Arab and Islamic world into something less than statelets to weaken it. This is history. Since the start of the confrontation between East and West, colonialism has been trying to infiltrate to impose its hegemony. The 20th century has seen the end of colonialist military domination. However, colonialism still has some influence and uses new methods, assisted in this by modern means of communication. Our skies abound with these means of communications, which can neither be stopped nor checked.

Radio broadcasts beamed to us carry programs directed at every community and tribe. This cultural infiltration, which takes place under an Islamic guise, conceals Zionist and colonialist designs. What is beamed to us is meant to fan the fires of sedition and sectarian strife. We see this in Lebanon. We see that it has come to fruition there. We also see it in the Iraq-Iran war, which has done nothing but kill the young men of those two Muslim countries. We see this with Libya and Chad, and among Muslim communities in Pakistan. In short, they do not want the Arab and Islamic world to enjoy any sense of stability. Stability means that we can stand on our own two feet, be independent, and exploit our resources for the establishment of a new system in terms of culture, industry, and agriculture. [passage omitted]

[Question] Your Eminence, let us go return to the question of sedition and whether its causes are latent and exploited by some or imported?

[Jad al-Haq] Since Egypt became an Islamic country, it has been marked by a type of coexistence that I feel is unique. Sectarian sedition arose in Egypt only after the arrival of Western colonialism. Colonialism planted the seeds of sedition and it was colonialism that treated Muslims and non-Muslims differently and distinguished between Egyptians and non-Egyptians.

It goes without saying that the independence Egypt won, the advent of the June 1952 revolution and all it has done for Egypt and for those African countries fighting for their independence made the colonialists bear a grudge against Egypt. After all, it was Egypt that led and continues to lead these people in their struggle against subservience. Therefore, it is only natural that colonialism would use various methods against Egypt.

I would like to stress here that Egyptians, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, are religious by nature.

[Question] Then where does the danger come from?

[Jad al-Haq] The Egyptian people's religious nature is also a source of danger. Their devotion to religion could be exploited to sow sedition among them. This is our weak point and others can take advantage of it. Those who wish to sow sedition may do so by creating an artificial dispute between the nation's two groups, the Muslims and the Copts, and by fabricating incidents by one group against the other, which are later attributed to religious differences. When this takes place, we even forget the simple truth that brothers may differ among themselves and quarrel. Therefore, when the dispute is depicted as a sectarian one, everyone believes this and some fan the fires of this sedition, which then erupts and harms the homeland's safety.

[Question] You said earlier that Egyptians are religious by nature. We would also like to note that tolerance is another Egyptian trait. How then can this tolerance be overshadowed by fanaticism and by extremism?

[Jad al-Haq] A sense of religious faith is not fanaticism. It only makes Egyptians scrupulously devoted to their religion and to its teachings. As for sectarianism, it means fanaticism. Fanaticism is alien to Egyptians. We must discuss the issue frankly; that is, the recent actions in various parts of Upper Egypt, which have been reported by the press. This should be an incentive for the authorities to investigate these incidents and to seek the truth behind them; who instigated them and who took part. The people must be told the results of these inquiries and those behind such incidents must be punished. We must not leave things to speculation or chance. This will only increase the confusion and people will start accusing one another. To my recollection, I do not believe any Egyptian damaged any place of worship, be it a mosque or a church.

What we saw in certain cities of Upper Egypt was something new and transient. We must be on guard against such things and alert to them. Islam preaches respect for places of worship, and urges Muslims to coexist and have good-neighborly relations with non-Muslims. One of Islam's principles is to let non-Muslims practice their faith. Their churches are part of this faith. These churches have always been protected and respected by Islam and Muslims. I also feel that non-Muslims honor mosques, as they too are places of worship.

If a mosque or church was attacked, it was done with the idea of causing trouble, which could then be ascribed to religious causes. We must be wary of such incidents, expose those responsible, and let them stand trial.

[Question] The world is currently swept by religious fundamentalism. Can we say that events in Egypt are at least part of this phenomenon?

[Jad al-Haq] In any case, the people's return to religion is something good. What is not good is to exceed the acknowledged limits of religious devotion and teachings by forcing people to convert to other sects.

[Question] Does your eminence mean among the Muslims themselves?

[Jad al-Haq] Yes, even among Muslims themselves. I feel that those who try to force others to change their faith are perverted intellectually and must be confronted intellectually. If they do not desist, the law must deal with them.

Islam has a clear and established code on worship, behavior, and morality. There are matters that no Muslim can argue about or contest. Everything else is open to interpretation. Many schools of jurisprudence exist in Islam. Never had there been a clash between two of these schools over a difference of opinion except in times such as ours, times when Islamic culture was weak.

People have moved away from the real interpretation of Islam. Nowadays, some claim that their ideas are fundamentalist at one point and something else later on. I would like to tell these people that they are attributing something to Islam that it never preached.

The sources of Islam are the holy Koran, the Sunna, and other works, which the people have accepted and which form an analogy and a consensus.

No one but the authorities on Islamic jurisprudence may interpret its teachings. Nor should believers all go forth together. If a contingent from each expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to religious studies, and admonish the people when they return to them, thus permitting them to learn to guard themselves against evil. [Koranic verse] This is the contingent that the Koran says should explain Islamic teachings to the people. [passage omitted]

[Question] After this long discussion of the consultative process in Islam and the training of preachers, will Your Eminence allow us to return to the worries of the people? May we go back to the subject of sedition, Al-Azhar, the church, and how to tackle this problem?

[Jad al-Haq] I believe the sound method for dealing with this sedition, or what is referred to as sectarian sedition, lies in seeking out those responsible for the incidents to become acquainted with their motives and their instigators.

Those with some degree of authority among the Muslim and Coptic communities should, after knowing the source of these incidents and their perpetrators and instigators, frankly tackle these matters among their own people, as Egypt has never been and, God willing, will never be a fertile land for sedition sparked by religion. [passage omitted]

We must give no reign to rumors. For example, the rumor about a spray that causes crosses to appear on the clothes of veiled women must be investigated by the authorities where such incidents occur. They must do their best to pinpoint their sources and to pass along their findings to the people. We must not ignore these incidents or procrastinate in settling them. It is a mistake to remain silent, as silence will only permit the rumors to grow stronger.

[Question] History shows that the entire Egyptian people, Muslims and Christians, have always defended their homeland with their blood. Demonstrations used to be staged with the sign of the cross and the crescent raised high. Have the people changed, or is there something new in Egyptian society that makes us see sectarian sedition from time to time?

[Jad al-Haq] I continue to say and to repeat that the Egyptian people's unity exists and is solid. These occasional incidents are something transient. They may have been inspired from abroad, concoted by external parties, or they may be the result of personal differences among people with no sense of responsibility. Those charged with guiding the Muslims and Copts must tackle these issues honestly and decisively at the same time. We must all proceed on the road to safeguarding the Egyptian people's unity. There is nothing in Egyptian history to justify any differences that will reach the point of attacking places of worship under the pretext of religion.

[Question] Is there any possibility of implementing Islamic law in a society as complex as ours, given the experiments of Iran and Sudan? What do you think about those who try to outdo each other in the name of Islamic law?

[Jad al-Haq] We cannot say our society is complex. Our society reflects the plethora of ideas and civilizations that travel so easily thanks to modern means of communications, which have made the entire appear seem like a single city. I believe Egyptian society is still in good shape, although some incidents occur here and there. As I said, the most important thing is that the Egyptian people, Muslims and Copts alike, remain devoted to their faith. Religion is the stronghold of the nation and the people.

As long as we put religion in its proper perspective and live within its framework we will all enjoy peace and security. [passage omitted]

Coptic Pope Views Incidents

JN230946 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 20 Mar 87 pp 13, 65

[Interview with Coptic Pope Shinudah III by *Al-Musawwar* correspondent Sana' al-Sa'id — date and place not given]

[Excerpts][Sana' al-Sa'id] What do you think of the recent events in Upper Egypt, which were touched off by those with vivid imaginations and whetted by naive myths and unbelievable rumors?

[Pope Shinudah] I was greatly pained by these incidents. I was just as pained by the burning of the mosque as I was by the burning of the church, as every house of God should be respected and revered by all. I was disturbed by this dispute among brothers. Christians and Muslims are part of the one Egypt and are the skilled creators of a glorious history that is the envy of all countries. I am confident that their hearts are full of love. However, I am also quite confident that rumors can affect the heart and give rise to doubt and suspicion. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] Can the recent incidents in Upper Egypt lead to or resemble the so-called sectarian sedition that occurred a few years ago? Do these events signal the start of a rift or division in Egypt?

[Pope Shinudah] Incidents have occurred in Upper Egypt. However, Upper Egypt is full of love, affection, chivalry, cooperation, and amity. What happened was condemned by all, and in no way indicates a division. Egypt still has a bright picture in our hearts and minds. An incident in a village or town hardly alters the fact that thousands of villages, towns, and suburbs live in peace and tranquility. Everyone may rest assured about Egypt, its security, and the rule of law. However, we want to be governed by affection and love more than the law. We want our present to be better than our past and our future better than our present. We want to have a clear conscience before God and the people. We would welcome any effort to unify ranks and join hearts, and would help it without any preconditions or reservations.

[Al-Sa'id] How do you explain the recent incidents, which could have affected national unity in Egypt? Are such events in harmony with the spirit of Egyptian society, both Muslim and Christian?

[Pope Shinudah] Undoubtedly, the incidents recently publicized by the newspapers in no way reflect the feelings of the Egyptian people. Muslims and Christians were deeply troubled by them. Everyone wishes this country well. There is nothing good to be gained by committing an act of aggression, starting a fire, or carrying out sabotage. Our primary role is to build this homeland with pure, sincere sentiments toward each other. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sa'id] In explaining what caused the fires in a mosque and a church in Upper Egypt, some were inclined to suggest that it was part of Israel's strategy to fragment Egypt and sow sectarian sedition by increasing the possibility of a confrontation between Muslims and Copts. What is your opinion on this?

[Pope Shinudah] The question of Israel having plans to divide a given country is not the major point. The important thing is the people's response to the policy of others. Do you think there is a single Egyptian who would respond favorably to a plan to fragment his country? This is impossible, regardless of what happens and regardless of the diversity of political beliefs. Everyone is united and firmly determined to preserve our homeland. No one would agree to its fragmentation. We as Copts have a known and firm stand. It is the same position that prevents and has prevented us as Christians from visiting Jerusalem. We have been faithful to this stand for many years.

Foreign Minister Meets With U.S. Official

NC241513 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1420 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA) — Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met today with Wat Cluverius, U.S. assistant secretary of state and special Middle East envoy, who is now in Cairo.

Their meeting dealt with efforts to bolster the regional peace process and with proposals related to the idea of an international conference, in which a majority of the parties concerned have expressed an interest. Such a gathering is viewed as the only practical means of negotiating a just and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East issue.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid also met with British Ambassador in Cairo Alan Bedford Urwick.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid and Ambassador Urwick reviewed developments in the Middle East and noted the importance of British and European participation in efforts to conclude a settlement. Their talk was part of the ongoing, intensive contacts undertaken by Egypt in its effort to promote an international coference as a general framework for negotiations to resolve the Palestinian issue and to secure a just and comprehensive peace.

Radio Terms Al-Qadhdhafi's Murder 'Permissible'

NC242230 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 2100 GMT 24 Mar 87

[From the "Voice of the Libyan People" program]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We have a word for the Armed Forces: You, our powerless Libyan Army, which is forced to disobey God the Creator and which submits to the devil Mu'ammar and his gang; you, our Armed Forces, are occupying our homeland. You are servants of Al-Qadhdhafi and his rotten gang. You are a shame us and our era. O officers and men, Al-Qadhdhafi is stabbing our soldiers with your hands. The damned satan has eliminated our existence in your name. Our country has been insulted, and our families scattered. What are you waiting for? Al-Qadhdhafi belongs to the Zionists. Your silence assassinates our homeland. Your surrender is a betrayal of our people. Your (?idleness) is an outrage to God. Hold on to your weapons wherever you can find them. Rebel against Al-Qadhdhafi, as defiance of his orders is obedience to God and will be for your own good. The murder of Al-Qadhdhafi is both permissible and legal. You, our men and officers, are the sons of every Libyan town and village. How can Al-Qadhdhafi's gang defeat you all? You, our men and officers, are our hope; you are the only hope. It is you who will purge the country of the regime led by the damned Hubal [reference to an ancient Arab idol].

Exports to SFRY Reportedly Exempted From Duty

NC231132 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA) — According to a responsible source at the Foreign Ministry, the SFRY has decided to completely exempt Egyptian imports from duty. This total exemption replaces the previously applied 50 percent exemption. The source added that the move was the result of a unilateral decision by the SFRY, which made no request for reciprocal treatment. The measure, which was enacted a few days ago, is part of the efforts being made to promote collaboration among the countries of the tripartite cooperation agreement [ittifaq al-ta'awun al-thulathi]. This accord covers Egypt, India, and the SFRY. It should be noted that the annual volume of trade between the two countries is valued at approximately $250 million.

Sidqi Discusses Economic Development Plans

NC242047 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpts] At a mass political rally held today in (Isko) City in Aswan Governorate, Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi said that during the current 5-year plan, 40 billion Egyptian pounds have been spent on economic and social developments projects, with the bulk being in agriculture and industrial renovation. Dr Sidqi said total investment under the next 5-year plan is expected to exceed 40 billion pounds.

The prime minister asserted that the public sector is the backbone of economic development. The next plan will give it a greater role, he continued, in tandem with the major projects being carried out by the government, which include infrastructure programs, power generation plants, and the establishment and introduction of public utilities.

Dr Sidqi noted that the government did not allow any infringement on the public interest or any manipulation of Egyptian will during its negotiations with the IMF.

The prime minister emphasized that life in Egypt is democratic and that freedom for all Egyptians is guaranteed by law.

Dr Sidqi also spoke about the importance of regional development in accordance with the principles of regional planning. He said that special attention will be paid to the development of the various governorates in the next 5-year plan. [passage omitted]

Dr Sidqi will pay a visit to Sawhaj Governorate tomorrow, Wednesday, to meet with political and popular leaders there.

Communique No 2,614 Details Combat Activities

JN241721 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Communique No 2,614 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 24 March 1987]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our victorious forces have continued their combat activities, inflicting further losses on the aggressors as follows:

1. In the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah, our forces directed concentrated artillery and tank fire at enemy positions and gun emplacements. Our forces also carried out other activities through which they halted enemy engineering efforts; destroyed one tank, one shovel [preceding word in English], one vehicle, one mortar, one heavy machine gun, seven infantry positions, and one observation post; blew up of five ammunition dumps; and killed three enemy personnel.

2. In the VII Army Corps sector, our brave men confronted the Khomeyniite aggressors, inflicting further losses. They also killed nine scoundrels, blew up three ammunition dumps, and destroyed one shovel and five various positions.

3. One of our units in the I Army Corps northern sector spotted some enemy soldiers and directed violent artillery fire at them. They killed 20 and wounded others while the rest fled under fire from our brave men.

4. Three enemy soldiers were killed, four gun emplacements destroyed, and one ammunition dump blown up in the IV Army Corps east of Maysan.

5. The despotic Khomeyniite clique's forces shelled residential areas in the steadfast city of Basra with long-range artillery. As a result, civilian property and houses were damaged.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 24 March 1987

Lloyds Says Iranian Oil Tanker Hit 23 March

JN241653 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1600 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The British maritime insurance company Lloyds today affirmed that Iraqi aircraft yesterday hit the Iranian oil tanker *Dina* near Khark Island. Lloyds said the Iranian tanker is still ablaze and that salvage ships hastened to save it. Lloyds said the Iranian oil tanker, owned by the Iranian Tanker Company, was built in 1975 and weighs 176,007 tons. An Iraqi military communique yesterday said a giant oil tanker was hit near Khark Island by our aircraft.

New Iranian Offensive in South Said 'Imminent'

JN241439 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 24 Mar (WAKH) — Urgent reports from the south [of Iraq] have said that the Iraqi forces east of Al-Basrah are on full alert, expecting a new Iranian offensive. These reports said an offensive is imminent and that the III Army Corps units, which have completed their preparations, are expecting the offensive at any time.

The area east of Al-Basrah was the site of a series of battles throughout the past 3 months after Iran dispatched its forces on 8 January in a large-scale offensive, which it called Karbala' 5, in a bid to occupy Basra.

Staff Lieutenant General Diya' al-Din Jamal, commander of the III Army Corps, described the defenses east of Al-Basrah as solid, impregnable mountains. He said: If the Iranians have competely failed in penetrating our defenses after more than 2 months, what will be the result if they try anew? In statements issued here, Lt Gen Jamal warned the Iranians against trying again to embark on an offensive east of Al-Basrah. He said: We are now fully prepared to confront and destroy any new offensive that the enemy would try to make. [Passage omitted on previous battles]

Tunisian Foreign Minister Arrives in Baghdad

JN242021 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1840 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA) — Tunisian Foreign Minister Hedi Mabrouk arrived in Baghdad this evening on an official visit to Iraq. He was received by Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, as well as by a number of officials and the Tunisian charge d'affaires.

USSR Supreme Soviet Official Arrives in Amman

JN241717 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1450 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Amman, 24 Mar (PETRA) — Vladimir Orlov, chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers Presidium and vice president of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, arrived in Amman at the head of a delegation on a week-long visit to Jordan in response to an invitation by House of Representatives Speaker 'Akif al-Fayiz.

Speaking to PETRA, Orlov praised relations between Jordan and the USSR, which, he noted, have developed since diplomatic relations were established 25 years ago. These ties, he added, are a source of pride and are a model of international cooperation based on mutual respect, principles of peaceful coexistence, and noninterference in each other's internal affairs. Orlov said the visit of the Soviet delegation to Jordan is in keeping with good bilateral relations and translates a mutual desire to boost parliamentary exchanges, particularly because the role of parliaments has increased appreciably in the cause of the struggle to save humanity from nuclear disaster and to remove hotbeds of tension and violence.

He observed that the Mideast has been in a continual state of war and tension for the past 2 decades, which makes it imperative for Soviet and Jordanian parliamentarians to work jointly and in cooperation with peaceloving forces for peace in this important part of the world. This is the fourth visit by Soviet parliamentarians to Jordan, he noted. Such visits, he added, have become good traditions that help reinforce friendship, trust, and understanding between the Soviet and Jordanian peoples.

On the USSR's stand on the efforts Jordan is exerting to establish just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, Orlov said the USSR views Jordan's call for an international conference to establish peace in the region with great understanding and the USSR joins the Jordanian stand. He stressed the USSR had called in the past for such a conference and was the first to have suggested forming a preparatory committee of parties to the conflict and the five UN Security Council permanent members to be entrusted with preparations for this conference.

Orlov went on to say that Jordan's intensive efforts in the international arena to bring this idea to fruition are distinctive efforts and that His Majesty King Husayn who is respected internationally and who is known for his objectivity and levelheadedness in tackling the Arab cause has succeeded in mobilizing many stands in support for Arab stands on the conflict in the region.

Orlov said Israel and those who back it always oppose the international community's will and obstruct the prevalence of justice and the establishment of peace in the Middle East. That's why, he said, the USSR condemned and continues to condemn the Israeli policy of expansion, calls for ending its illegal occupation of Arab territories, and expresses solidarity with the Arab people's struggle to safeguard their independence and liberate the lands usurped from them.

The delegation during its visit will hold talks with Ahmad al-Lawzi, Senate president, and Isma'il Hijazi, deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, on the state of affairs in the region and ways of promoting parliamentary relations. The delegation will also visit several cultural and historical sites in the Kingdom. The delegation was welcomed at the airport by Isma'il Hijazi; Rizq al-Bataynah, chairman of House Foreign Affairs Committee; Hani Khayr, secretary general of parliament; the USSR ambassador in Amman; and embassy staff.

AL-DUSTUR Lauds King Husayn's Talks in Egypt

JN232014 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Mar 87 p 1, 19

[Editorial: "The Husayn-Mubarak Meeting"]

[Text] At the conclusion of the brotherly talks His Majesty King Husayn held with His Excellency President Husni Mubarak in Cairo yesterday, his majesty reaffirmed the constant Jordanian position and full support for fraternal Iraq in its defensive, legitimate war against the Iranian aggression that has been going on for about 7 years.

This position, reaffirmed by His Majesty King Husayn in Cairo, constitutes one of numerous stands in which the two fraternal Arab countries have identical policies on many pan-Arab issues and their ramifications.

Perhaps the views of Jordan and Egypt on the issue of an international conference for establishing peace in the Middle East and the two leaderships' understanding of the composition, tasks, and nature of this conference constitutes one of the major and essential common denominators in the polices of the two capitals regarding the Middle East crisis.

Undoubtedly, the special relations of brotherhood and continuous contacts and consultations between the two political leaderships in Jordan and Egypt during the past few years have contributed to boosting and consolidating the Arab position calling for peace in the region through an international conference. This is because Jordan and Egypt enjoy special importance on the map of Arab action as well as trust, respect, and credibility on the international level.

Hence, we view King Husayn's visit to Cairo and the meetings between top officials of the two countries as another large and important step not only toward consolidating bilateral relations, but also toward fostering joint Arab action, for which these bilateral meetings constitute a realistic alternative in light of the continuing stalemate.

While pinning the greatest hopes on King Husayn's continuous efforts to serve the Arab nation's causes and trusting his majesty's wisdom and ability to build strong bridges among various Arab capitals that are unable even to meet, let alone agree, we at the same time stress that the Arab nation's only alternative is achieving solidarity to regain usurped rights and to confront all the fateful challenges facing it.

FRG Increases Aid to West Bank Residents

JN240835 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 24 Mar 87 pp 1, 18

[Text] Amman — A responsible source at the FRG Embassy in Amman has announced that the FRG Government has decided to increase its annual aid to residents of the occupied territories to DM12 million. Last year's assistance was valued at DM7.5 million. This aid is used to improve the living conditions of citizens in the occupied territories. The source pointed out that the total amount of FRG Government aid to residents of the occupied Arab territories between 1967 and 1986 was DM28 million. This amount was distributed as follows: DM19 million was channeled through private organizations, DM4.5 million of technical aid was disbursed through the Jordanian Government, and DM4.5 million was devoted to development projects undertaken by UNICEF.

Paper: Weakness Encourages Iranian 'Belligerency'

JN240935 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 24 Mar 87 p 24

[Political editor's article "The Security of the Arab Gulf and Responsibility" in the "Spotlights" column]

[Text] Had Tehran indeed been responsible for the security of the Gulf and the safety and development of its littoral states, it would have been very understandable for the Tehran rulers to declare "their responsibility for the security of the Gulf," its passageways, and the wealth it exports to the world. But Tehran is only concerned with expansion, hegemony, and war, and this means that "its responsibility for the security of the Persian Gulf" is for the purpose of dominating the states that share Iran's ownership of this closed sea. This, in turn, means giving the United States in particular the justification to enter the region, to exploit the anxiety felt by the Arab states on the Arab Gulf littoral, and to turn the Gulf into a zone for the concentration of U.S. military power. This also means turning the Gulf into a zone of international polarization, because the USSR will not permit a concentration of U.S. forces there.

We will understand Tehran's "actual responsibility for the security of the Gulf" if it is indeed concerned about its security and the safety and development of its states. After all, it has a 50 percent share in the Gulf. But what we do not understand are the statements by certain Arab Gulf leaders that the security of international shipping in the Gulf is an international responsibility. Such statements are not at all consistent with the meanings of national [qawmiyah] sovereignty and the preservation of national [qawmiyah] interests. Is there an international police force for protecting the freedom of shipping like there are traffic police in the streets of Umm al-Qaywin to control traffic, prevent offenses, and assaults on people's lives and property on both sides of the road?

The Arab Gulf or the Persian Gulf is an internal lake, divided equally between the Arab and Iranian nations. If there is any responsibility for the security of this lake and the freedom of shipping in it, then it is a joint responsibility, that is if Tehran chooses to respect its partners. Otherwise, Tehran's responsibility will mean domination. On the other hand, the Arabs' abandonment of their responsibility will mean giving the big powers the opportunity to dominate the region. The empty Iranian might will, in the end, become like the Arab weakness. Is this in the interest of our nation?

Iranian belligerency in shelling tankers carrying Arab oil and in impounding ships carrying imported goods to Arab ports must be stopped by the Arabs, even by force.

Iranian planes that approached the Saudi coast were shot down instantaneously. So Theran stopped sending its planes. Had the Gulf Arabs maintained a firm stand right from the beginning, Tehran would not have dared impound more than 70 ships, most of them Arab. It is Arab weakness that tempts Iran to obstruct Arab shipping in the Gulf. Otherwise, why does Tehran not dare to stop or shell any ship flying the American, French, or British flag?

The Gulf Arabs are not merely seeking justice for their causes and their national [qawmiyah] rights in the international community. We have previously entrusted our cause, the Palestine question, to the United Nations. After the establishment of the Zionist entity, we went to the United Nations every day. We have sent every popular story-teller as our representative to the United Nations to defend our cause. And when Israel swallowed up the whole of Palestine, the Golan, and one third of Lebanon we also took our weakness to the United Nations. In fact, the peak of patriotism has ended up in calling on the Big Five, who have forgotten they are big, to solve the Middle East question — the question of our life and destiny in face of aggression.

Gone are the days when people used to say: To present any national cause before the international community is to abandon it!

'Death Sentence' Against Normandin in Force

NC242021 Paris AFP in English 2019 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Beirut, March 24 (AFP) — The Revolutionary Justice Organization (RJO) said Tuesday night the "death sentence" pronounced against French hostage Jean-Louis Normandin was neither postponed nor cancelled and that his second trial was currently in progress.

The organization, which has threatened to execute Mr. Normandin Tuesday, made the statement in a communique delivered to the *Al-Nahar* daily here.

In the communique, handwritten in Arabic and joined to a photograph of the hostage, the RJO said it was "examining the excuses and justifications presented by the French Government, as well as its latest promises and pledges."

"If these (promises) are realized, they will bring about very positive and speedy results," the communique said, adding that the opposite would bring about "a tragedy after which repentance would be useless."

Mr. Normandin, a French television crewman, was kidnapped on March 8, 1986.

Fadlallah, Shams al-Din on Hostages Issue

NC242058 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Receiving French hostage Jean-Louis Normandin's father today, Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah expressed his belief that the hostages issue is an international one, and declared that he will spare no effort to save Normandin and the rest of the hostages. He also noted that means of pressure available outside Lebanon in this context may have greater influence than domestic efforts.

Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, who also met with Normandin's father, said the abductors should respond to the peaceful efforts being made to free the hostages.

Birri, British Envoy Discuss Hostage Issue

NC241347 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Attorney Nabih Birri, minister of state for the south and reconstruction, today discussed the issue of the British hostages with John Gray, the British ambassador to Lebanon. After the meeting, the ambassador expressed his hope that friends [not further specified] will be able to persuade the abductors to free their hostages. He said that kidnapping is a crime against mankind and benefits no one.

The discussions also dealt with attempts to reach draft solutions to the Lebanese crisis in light of the continuation of discussions between Presidents al-Jumayyil and al-Asad.

UAE Paper on 'Extreme' Syrian-Hizballah Tension

NC251021 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] The Abu Dhabi-based *Al-Ittihad* paper has quoted sources in the Al-Biqa' valley as saying there is extreme tension between Syria and the extremist Shi'ite organizations. The tension became particularly clear after the Syrian command in the Al-Biqa' valley asked Hizballah to vacate the Shaykh 'Abdallah Barracks in the area at a date not later than the beginning of next week. The same source added tension between the two parties is an extension of the differences between the Syrians and Hizballah in the wake of the Syrian entry into West Beirut.

In another development, the paper reported that the Syrian forces in West Beirut have recently managed to determine the locations of the three U.S. professors and the Indian professor kidnapped from Beirut University College. The paper quoted well-informed diplomatic sources as expecting the Syrian forces to be able to release the four hostages before the end of this month. The paper said that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad had promised former U.S. President Jimmy Carter that he would seek the release of the U.S. hostages.

Lebanese Forces Say Syrians Aid Would-be Assassin

NC241806 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Commenting on a statement made by Rene Qa'du Mu'awwad, a Lebanese Forces security source has made the following statement:

We do not want to reply to the allegations made by the so-called Rene Qa'du Mu'awwad or to sink to the cheap though unsurprising level of this person, who has made crime both a means and an end. However, to clarify the truth, which Qa'du has tried to falsify, we want to stress the following points:

The accused has not tried to deny the unsuccessful attempt [to assassinate Lebanese Forces' leader Samir Ja'ja'] as much as to justify it. The man called Rene Qa'du Mu'awwad did not leave Lebanese territory, except to travel between north Lebanon and Syria throughout the planning stages for the unsuccessful operation. The reported documents proving he was outside Lebanon during that period were forged with the help of Syrian intelligence, which required 10 days to complete the necessary papers. The Syrians' experience in this field and their role in terrorist operations in various countries are no secret.

Junblatt Leaves Damascus for London 25 March

NC251008 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] PSP leader Walid Junblatt and PSP Political Bureau member Akram Shuhayyib left Damascus for London today in response to an official invitation.

Reportedly To Visit USSR

JN251100 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1000 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] PSP leader Walid Junblatt left Damascus for London today. Informed sources in the Syrian capital said Junblatt will travel to Moscow from London, while sources at Junblatt's office in Damascus had said yesterday that Junblatt will return to Lebanon today.

'Well Over' 15 Lahd Personnel Killed in Attack

NC241234 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Well over 15 enemy agents were killed when resistance fighters attacked a position in Yarin at 0200 today jointly held by enemy personnel and agents. The resistance fighters managed to gain control following a 30-minute clash with the personnel manning the position. The fighters remained there for 10 minutes, after which they raised the Amal Movement's flag. Immediately thereafter, enemy forces lit up the area and mounted a wide-scale search campaign by means of three helicopters, which later airlifted the wounded to the occupied Arab territories. A half-tracked vehicle, an armored personnel carrier, and a 12.7 machine gun emplacement were destroyed. One of the resistance fighters was killed.

Resistance Attacks Radar Post in South

NC241634 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Statement issued by the Amal Movement on 24 March — read by announcer]

[Text] At 0930 this morning, a group of rebels belonging to the martyrs of Kunin al-Tahta of the Faithful Resistance attacked the radar post in Jabal Alsafi with rockets and light- and medium-caliber machine guns. Three agents who wee on the roof of the building were killed. A bunker was destroyed and those inside it were killed or wounded. A support unit then shelled the same radar post with 82-mm and 60-mm guns, scoring direct hits and inflicting casualties.

Afterward, the enemy and his agents shelled and raked the area with fire, but no casualties have been reported. The group managed to return safely to its base.

Israelis 'Kidnap' Soldier, Civilian in South

NC241520 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The townships of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah [in the south] came under heavy artillery shelling today, in which some houses and green house covers were damaged.

Israeli intelligence men kidnapped a Lebanese Army soldier and a private citizen belonging to the Turmus family this morning.

SLA Reportedly Fire at UNIFIL Posts in South

NC241944 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] A UNIFIL source has declared that the South Lebanese Army militias continue to fire intermittently at posts manned by the Irish contingent. The militias in Tallat Haddathah fired three artillery rounds at an Irish post in Haddathah this morning, but missed it. They also fired machine gun rounds at the Irish post located 50 meters from the crossing point in Bayt Yahun, which the Zionist occupation forces set up about a month ago.

Karami Chairs General Authority Meeting

NC242024 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Statement by Prime Minister Rashid Karami, followed by remarks in response to questions by unidentified correspondents, following the weekly meeting of Beirut City General Authority — recorded]

[Text] The General Authority followed up the issue of security in West Beirut. It expressed its interest in and satisfaction with the general situation. Everyone is prepared for and alert to all measures that should be taken to implement and consolidate the security plan, so that all citizens may feel at ease. We sensed from our exchanges that all are satisfied with the stability of security in this area. I have said, and I reiterate, that the security plan must be reinforced by political action leading to a Lebanese detente. This action must be based on a reform plan to end Lebanon's sufferings.

I recall that when we were meeting at the Race Track, we said any agreement must open the way to B'abda and thence to Damascus. However, fate has willed that the road will lead from Damascus to B'abda, if agreement is reached in Damascus as a result of the discussions taking place there. I hope this precious opportunity will not be wasted. Let us make the most of it so that Lebanon may take the road which will lead to its salvation. This is the wish of all of us. We are waiting for results of these meetings, and we hope they will respond to the aspirations of all the Lebanese. Now and then we hear statements or hints indicating that success will not come quickly. In light of this, we urge everyone to take pity on these people who have suffered and are still suffering so much. We must work to bring about an early reform, emanating from democracy and based on justice and equality. This must be done as soon as possible, to alleviate the economic, social, and day-to-day burdens of this country and its people. If we can achieve this, then we will have accomplished something of historical significance which will be remembered with gratitude.

[Correspondent] According to some of the papers today, consultations are taking place in a bid to convene the cabinet under your chairmanship and then to hold a cabinet meeting chaired by President al-Jumayyil, without Ministers Birri and Junblatt. Is this true?

[Karami] No. No one has approached me or spoken to me about this. I do not know if I am like the husband, who is always the last to know.

[Correspondent] Is there anything new concerning the airport and a security plan for the eastern part of the capital?

[Karami] No one has approached me regarding the results of the consultations taking place between Middle East Airlines and overseas insurance companies. Until we receive these results, we cannot decide on reopening Beirut International Airport. As far as the eastern area, combat lines, and crossing points are concerned, the Army has assumed its responsibility and is working to establish security on both sides of the lines. Further measures can only be decided after political exchanges and perhaps in light of the discussions in Damascus.

Talas Receives Visiting Soviet Military Official

JN231933 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1815 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Major General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, received in his office this evening Yegorov, admiral of the Soviet Navy and head of the support organization for land, sea, and air forces in the USSR [name and title as heard], and his delegation. The meeting was attended by Comrade Muhammad Ibrahim al-'Ali, commander of the People's Army, and the Soviet military attache in Damascus.

Al-Shar' Receives Lebanese Information Minister

JN241528 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1115 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Lebanese Information Minister Joseph Skaf today. Talks revolved around the current situation in the Lebanese arena.

Al-Asad Issues Laws Increasing Salaries, Pensions

JN2321[illegible]4 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
2015 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad has issued Laws No 6 and 7, dated 23 March 1987, containing the increase in monthly salaries and wages as of 1 April 1987 for all civilian and military employees in the ministries, public departments, institutions, corporations, public sector companies and establishments, municipalities, local council and popular action units, confiscated companies and establishments, private schools that have been completely confiscated and all their holdings, various outlying public sector areas, and the joint sector areas for which a decision by the prime minister will be issued.

This is in accordance with the following: 35 percent on the first 800 Syrian pounds of the monthly salary or wage; 25 percent on the next 400 Syrian pounds of the monthly salary or wage; 15 percent on the next 400 Syrian pounds of the monthly salary or wage; 10 percent on remaining higher amounts of the monthly salary or wage.

Moreover, there will be an increase in the pensions of military and civilian individuals who are subject to the laws and regulations of employees and workers in municipalities, the Cooperative Agricultural Bank, those who are subject to the laws of social security, and the mujahidin who are subject to Legislative Decree No 48 of 1973 and its amendments. This is according to the following: 20 percent on the first 400 Syrian pounds of the salary; 15 percent on the next 500 pounds of the salary; 10 percent on the remaining amounts of the salary that exceed this.

Shamir: 'Don't Think We Can Help' U.S. Hostage

TA241831 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir says although Israel would like to help U.S. hostage Alann Steen, it will not free any prisoner to gain his release.

[Begin recording] [Shamir] I don't think we will negotiate or do anything with these people.

[Unidentified correspondent] Sir, even if this is a sick and dying man?

[Shamir] Well, you know, it's not our fault that...[Shamir changes thought] We would like to help him, but I don't think we can help him by that. [end recording]

MA'ARIV: Assessments of Soviet Contacts Vary

TA241358 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Mar 87
pp A1, 2

[Report by Refa'el Mann and Ran Dagoni]

[Text] Foreign Ministry Director General Avraham Tamir met this week in New York with Soviet UN Ambassador Aleksandr Belonogov. Tamir is holding talks with diplomats from countries that do not have diplomatic relations with Israel.

The issue of the international conference featured prominently in the Tamir-Belonogov meeting, but Israeli sources claim reports of a Soviet attempt to "seduce" Israel into accepting a conference in return for Soviet readiness to resume low-level diplomatic ties are incorrect.

Sources at UN headquarters said that in anticipation of the meeting, the Soviets spread the rumor that consulates would open shortly in Moscow and Jerusalem. The Tamir-Belonogov meeting was initiated by Israel to discuss, among other issues, emigration from the Soviet Union, but the Soviet delegate first broached the Soviet Union's desire to hold an international peace conference. Tamir also wanted to meet with the PRC's UN ambassador, but as late as last night no such meeting had come about.

The Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry have issued conflicting assessments of the significance of the Soviet signals. While some people believe these are positive signs aimed at improving relations with Israel, others maintain these steps are merely intended to portray Moscow in a positive light, although there is no meaningful change in its position.

However, one fact that is not contested is that meetings between Soviet and Israeli diplomats have become more frequent recently. The contacts are held openly and no attempt is made to shroud them in a veil of secrecy.

The Soviet Union does not want to force a solution upon Israel; rather, it wants to make possible direct talks between Israel and the Arab countries within the framework of an international peace conference. Moscow believes there is no contradiction between such a conference and direct negotiations between the parties.

This up-to-date information on the Soviets' position has recently been conveyed to Israel via the United States, following a meeting held in Washington between a Soviet diplomat and a senior U.S. official. Jerusalem officials' assessments of whether the Soviet diplomats' remarks attest to a change in Moscow's attitude toward the peace process vary and are even conflicting.

UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar has reported that the Soviets support a peace conference.

At the same time, there are some fundamental issues on which the Soviet Union has not changed its position at all, such as its opposition to permitting the Palestinian issue to be discussed in bilateral talks. The Soviets have similarly announced that they believe diplomatic ties with Israel are not a precondition for Soviet participation in the conference. As to the second condition, the emigration of Jews, the Soviets have again called this a domestic matter.

Shamir on Pollard Inquiry, Herut, Other Issues

TA241153 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1105 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Report by Razi Barqay on interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir; in Shamir's Jerusalem office "this morning" — recorded]

[Excerpt] [Barqay] The prime minister is in an optimistic mood regarding the Herut convention, and even the Pollard affair and everything related to it. An arrangement will be worked out for the three witnesses, Shamir told us. It is true that the Israeli Government promised the Americans it would cooperate with them, but we did not guarantee it would transfer all the material to them. We told them in advance that there are limits to this cooperation.

[Shamir] I think that from all I know, as far as the government's commitments are concerned, the fact-finding committee's work can certainly continue without hurting the interests of Liba'i's clients. The attorney general knows all the facts and is relying on them in his discussions with Attorney Liba'i.

[Barqay] Mr Shamir, the matter of Herut: Does the expected or possible election of David Levi as your deputy, as No 2 in the movement — according to his claim — give him any lead in the battle for the inheritance — permit me to use that term — when the time comes?

[Shamir] First of all, I do not accept either the term inheritance or battle for the inheritance. When the time comes, when it becomes necessary to pick the head of the list, the Herut Movement Center will meet and choose. It will decide as it sees fit.

[Barqay] If David Levi is elected deputy, will this not make him the primary condidate when the time comes?

[Shamir] There are no primary or secondary candidates. Elections leave everything open.

[Barqay] How do you expect the convention to be? You have reached a partial arrangement regarding the framework of the agenda. In a letter to the representatives you stressed one point that is very important to you, that the convention should conclude calmly because there are ambushes awaiting us outside.

[Shamir] That is correct. I hope all the representatives to the convention want it to be conducted and concluded in an orderly and respectable fashion.

[Barqay] Another headline in the talk with the prime minister was relations with the Soviet Union. There are signs of the possibility of a change. More Jews are leaving, but this is still not a significant change. Moscow's official position, he said, has not changed.

There is also the appointment of an ambassador to the United States. He said: Differences of opinion within the Labor Party have not yet been resolved. I was in favor of extending Rosenne's term in office, but Peres wanted him recalled. My candidate for the post was and remains the Foreign Ministry's Hanan Bar-on. Eban's possible candidacy is hypothetical. After all, the man has already announced that he is not interested. [passage omitted on meeting with religious leader]

Rabin Speaks to Knesset Foreign Affairs Committee

Denies U.S. Spy Rumor

TA241254 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1145 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has denied the report attributed to Senator Durenberger that an Israeli officer spied for the United States during the Lebanese war. Rabin told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee he had checked the matter with the IDF and the General Security Service [Shin Bet], and they did not know of a single case of this kind.

Says U.S. Cooperation Unchanged

TA241256 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1240 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpt] The Defense Minister has said there has been no change in the entire fabric of strategic cooperation with the United States as a result of the Pollard affair. Minister Rabin was speaking to members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. The desire to maintain the whole gamut of existing cooperation continues, and there is even a desire to go beyond that: The United States has emphasized its desire to deepen cooperation with Israel. [passage omitted]

Calls Pollard Case 'Exception'

TA241330 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1300 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The defense minister has denied reports alleging he told the Knesset committee investigating the Pollard affair that similar cases have occurred previously. Minister Rabin told the members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the Pollard affair was an exception and a solitary incident, and added that he cannot recall making the statements attributed to him. Knesset Member [MK] Abba Eban, who is chairman of the committee, also denied the report attributed to the minister.

Our correspondent Razi Barqay reports that the defense minister also told committee members that a check with the IDF and the Shin Bet revealed that no U.S. spy has ever been uncovered in the IDF.

At today's committee session, MK Yosi Sarid said he has learned that Gush Emunim intends to set up 12 new settlements during Passover. Minister Rabin responded that if any settlement is set up in contravention of government decisions, the matter will be dealt with.

Investigation Into Pollard Affair Continues

Subcommittee Sees 'Whitewashing'

TA250601 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
0500 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Continuing its investigation into the Pollard affair, the Knesset Intelligence Subcommittee will today question former spymaster Rafi Eytan, Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein, and former Defense Minister Moshe Arens. The committee members have been shocked by the gravity of the picture that has been emerging, as we hear from our Knesset reporter Jack Katzenell:

[Katzenell] When the investigation was launched the chairman, Abba Eban, and his Likud colleague, Eliyahu Ben-elisar, voiced their determination to get to the bottom of the Pollard affair quickly. But, it has been a sobering experience for the six subcommittee members to uncover the gravity of the affair. The lies, the contradictions, and the attempts at whitewashing have struck the investigators with awe mingled with apprehension.

The committee has been questioning representatives of the intelligence community and other defense officials. But the main thrust of the investigation is on the conduct of the political echelon from the time that Jonathan Pollard was caught. And, the picture that has emerged is one of confusion, superficiality, and downright panic. However, at the hearing, the testimony of Prime Minister Shamir, Vice Premier Peres, and Defense Minister Rabin has been identical, right down to the expressions used. They have been dropping not very subtle hints that the entire prospect of improving Israel's relations with the United States depends on the six subcommittee members and on the conclusions they reached. This puts the investigators in a dilemma. After all, with the exception of Dr Burg, they are all Likud or Labor men.

In the near future the subcommittee will complete its hearings, but it will take several weeks to evaluate the evidence and draw up the conclusions. Some heads are expected to roll, and the committee members are by no means certain that they will all be on the lower echelons.

Eytan Takes Responsibility

TA251009 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Mar 87 p 1

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] The position of the former head of the Science Liaison Bureau, Refa'el Eytan, is that he did not receive political approval to recruit Jonathan Pollard and that he did not report on the running of Pollard to any of the ministers responsible for Eytan's activities. This position means that Eytan is actually assuming the main responsibility, thereby increasing the chance the political echelons will not be harmed by the conclusions of the committees investigating the affair.

A reliable source has told *Ha'aretz* that Eytan believes that to the best of his understanding, the authority given him as head of the Science Liaison Bureau (SLB) provided him with a broad field in which to make his own decisions, and he interpreted this as having the authority and right to collect varied intelligence information without requiring any specific permission.

Refa'el Eytan testified this week before the Knesset subcommittee headed by Abba Eban, which is investigating the Pollard affair.

Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who studied the material supplied by Pollard on more than one occasion, claims he took no interest in the source of this material because political officials, as a rule, content themselves with receiving an assessment of the degree of reliability of the material, and there is no room for questions about its origins.

Chief of Staff Moshe Levi claims he was not briefed on the purpose of Avi'em Sela's trips to the United States. His position is that he authorizes dozens of trips abroad for officers each month, and cannot go into the details of the trips.

HA'ARETZ Views Motives Behind U.S. Spy Story

TA241230 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Mar 87 p 13

[Commentary by Ze'ev Schiff: "U.S. Spies in Israel"]

[Text] Senator David Durenberger, former chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, may know what he is talking about when he claims CIA chief Casey broke a bilateral agreement not to operate agents in each others' countries even before the Pollard affair was uncovered. Sen Durenberger may very well have heard in the Intelligence Committee that the United States was not content with normal intelligence information gathering and had been operating an agent, or agents, as Israel did in the Pollard case. It is clear that there is some smoke here, but doubtful if this proves there is a fire or even smoldering embers. Before we deal with what caused the smoke, I would like to refer to another aspect of the story of the U.S. spy operating in Israel.

When an Israeli spokesman denied the claim that a senior Israeli officer had been exposed as a U.S. spy, a strange reaction came from Washington. *The Washington Post* was cited as saying Israel was denying this because it was unpleasant for it to admit a grave failure and the treachery of a senior Israeli officer. This assumption is basically faulty. The truth is completely different, and it should be told even to those who so desperately want a U.S. spy to be captured in Israel to put us in the right and counterbalance our actions in the Pollard affair.

The view here, for some time, has been that the FBI and the staff at the U.S. Department of Justice are engaging in carefully planned psychological warfare in the Pollard affair, both against Israel and against the Jewish community in the United States. The tale of the U.S. spy is believed to be part of this campaign that began even earlier, crudely, and in a completely unsophisticated way, with the planting of various reports. Among other things, these reports quoted senior Israeli intelligence officers as claiming that Pollard was so important to Israeli intelligence, not only to Rafi Eytan's Science Liaision Bureau, that it was decided to call him by another name, Kohen, because his successes were reminiscent of the Israeli spy Eli Kohen who worked in Syria. The implication here is that the job of operating Pollard was not that of a small branch such as the Science Liaison Bureau, but of the intelligence service as a whole.

The serious implications of the story of the U.S. spy in Israel should be noted. First, the political echelons in Israel who knew about the U.S. spy decided to retaliate, giving birth to the Pollard espionage affair. In other words, in contrast to all the reports denying that our politicians knew of Pollard's recruitment and operation, they are now being portrayed as the ones who gave the order and were directly responsible for the affair. Second, there is no talk of just any Israeli spy or a certain senior officer but of an immigrant from the United States, the message being that U.S. Jews are an element that cannot be trusted in any event. They cannot be relied on from the security aspect; they have "dual loyalty" toward the United States, which could also pose a problem for Israel.

The story about a senior Israeli officer who was caught in the act of transferring war plans and documents to the Americans during the Lebanon war is not true. All the clarifications I made to this report did not confirm it. One way or another, anyone who wants to grasp this as a pretext for running Pollard is grasping at straws.

Under no circumstances should we conclude from this that the Americans are not busy gathering intelligence in Israel, as the *New York Times* wrote recently. And I am not referring to taking detailed photos from satellites and deciphering them using the most modern technological devices. In the field of monitoring, too, they are doing what the Russians are trying to do. Most of these things fall within the rules of the game — provided, of course, that an ally does not listen in on the telephone calls of the head of the other state, for example. If, for example, it turns out that Israel is routinely listening in on the U.S. President's conversations or those of the U.S. secretary of defense, or that the United States is listening in on telephone calls made by the Israeli prime minister or defense minister, this would be breaking the rules of the game.

The question is how far are they going in collecting information on individuals. Are they operating paid agents, apart from the usual use of diplomats? Are they using them to infiltrate sensitive areas, as happened in the Pollard case? Sometimes the information gathering is done almost publicly. After the Al-Litani campaign, for example, in 1978, reports were published in the United States saying the CIA had given the military attache in Israel an outstanding service award for his excellent work. It may be assumed that such a decoration, particularly when awarded to a military man who does not directly belong to the CIA, is not given for nice behavior.

From all the examinations we conducted, there is no sign of any active U.S. spy having been caught in Israel, even without having stood trial. However, there are people who claim that in the past attempts were made to tempt people — with money, too — to obtain secret information. During Sharon's tenure as defense minister his staff sowed paranoia when it came to Americans. Relations with the top ranks in the United States cooled and senior officers were warned not to maintain contacts with Americans without permission. This reached a peak when Sharon decided not to hand the lessons of the war over to the Pentagon. Some of these restrictions also originated in the fact that the National Security Unit, headed by Maj General Tamir and that worked out of Sharon's office, wanted to preserve its sole prerogatives in these contacts.

When Arens replaced Sharon in the Defense Ministry things calmed down, although there was a definite feeling that war plans had been leaked from the Israeli General Staff. At one time I published (in the book "War of Confusion") that some of these reached not only the Phalange headquarters — and the IDF conducted a thorough investigation into this — but also the United States, where they were leaked for publication before the war; however, this did not attract much attention. Colonel Dr 'Imanu'el Wald's excessively tough investigation, after taking documents in the dead of night for the purpose of his research in the office of the head of the IDF Planning Department, also seems to have originated in the spy panic. The Pollard affair, apparently with the help of the FBI, is making headlines with these issues again. But the important thing for us is that the Americans were not caught infiltrating an agent into the Israeli intelligence establishment or into the IDF in general, while Israel was caught in such a serious act in the Pollard case.

Peres Meets Palestinians on Peace Conference

TA241258 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1145 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] A delegation of 15 Palestinian leaders from the administered territories met today with Vice Premier Shim'on Peres. Among the 15 was Hikmat al-Masri from Nabulus, Dr Nabil al-Ja'bari from Hebron, and Edward Hamis from Bethlehem. The meeting centered on PLO participation in any Middle East peace conference. Details from reporter Dick Winter:

[Begin recording][Winter] When the 2 and 1/2-hour meeting was over, the 15 Palestinian leaders came out to speak to the press. The elder statesman of the group, Hikmat al-Masri from Nabulus, had this to say:

[Al-Masri] All we asked that the Palestinians with the PLO should be represented in the international congress. Well, he had many views, different views between him and we. No, not any idea. [as heard]

[Winter] Although the meeting was held without warning, it was said by Foreign Ministry sources to be a continuation of another session with Shim'on Peres, held nearly 6 months ago, when he was prime minister. Peres told the group that the next step in the peace process must be negotiations. He added that he was in favor of free political expression in the administered territories as long as it was not under the threat of terrorism.

The 15 Palestinians, representing towns and villages throughout the territories and the Gaza Strip, have all voiced their support for the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, but they have also made known their view that the only way to peace is through Jordan and King Husayn. [end recording]

Comments on Elections, PLO

TA241849 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpts] Vice Premier Peres told 15 Palestinian dignitaries today that he favors municipal elections in the administered territories only if they could be held in a violence-free atmosphere. A visiting delegation told Peres that as long as there are no elections in the territories, no Palestinians, other than the PLO, can be considered their authentic representatives. More from reporter Steve Rodan:

[Begin recording] [Rodan] [Passage omitted] Peres said the two subjects discussed were the peace process and the situation in the territories, and Peres described the talks as open and frank.

[Peres] They have said look, there is the PLO, and we are not elected. So I told them don't forget that the PLO leadership was neither elected as well. Nobody is elected. And I told them point blank: If you have a group of persons that you feel that can represent you in meaningful negotiations with Israel, we are ready to go. But the PLO first of all has shown that it cannot even reach an agreement with Jordan, so how can they reach an agreement with us? And then the PLO — I told them even if you support the view of the PLO, the problem is do you support the methods of the PLO?

[Rodan] Peres said he then asked the delegation: Do you support violence and terror? The Palestinians said no. When the Palestinians asked for municipal elections Peres said he would be happy to support their request, but such elections would have to be held in an atmosphere free of threats of violence, or else the elections would be meaningless. [end recording]

AFP: Common Appeal With Palestinians for Talks

NC242126 Paris AFP in English 2040 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Jerusalem, March 24 (AFP) — A spectacular appeal for an international peace conference on the Middle East next year could be taken Wednesday in Jerusalem by Labor Party leaders and Palestinian moderates, reliable sources told AFP

For the first time in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a common appeal is to be made by moderates of both sides, including two Israeli Labor Party "doves," former foreign minister Abba Eban, and Rafi 'Edri. The Palestinian delegation will include pro-Palestine Liberation Organization personalities such as Hanna Sinyurah Fayiz Abu Rahmah, and Hikmat al-Masri.

A few thorny details in the statement are still being discussed, and further negotiations are scheduled for Wednesday morning, although observers in both delegations hoped Tuesday that there was no coming back on terms already agreed upon.

The Israelis insist on the term "direct negotiations" in the international conference, while a few Palestinians seem to be hesitating to accept these terms, Israeli and Palestinian sources said.

The meeting will be in Jerusalem's King David Hotel, the sources added.

The prospective communique, disclosed to AFP, says the peace settlement has "to consider the legitimate needs of Israel's security and the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people."

If Wednesday's initiative succeeds, a meeting may be scheduled Thursday between Shim'on Peres, foreign minister and leader of the Labor Party, and Palestinian nationalist moderates from the occupied territories, reliable Palestinian and Labor Party sources said.

Already on Tuesday, Mr. Peres met with 16 pro-Jordan Palestinian officials to discuss the international conference.

"I am ready to accept that Palestinians be free to exercise political activities in the territories, as long as they do not serve as a cover for acts of violence," Mr. Peres was quoted on radio as saying.

Mr. 'Edri, head of the Labor Party in parliament, told AFP he would probably participate in the initiative and that it "would be an unprecedented and very important event." He added, "it is clear that the Likud (conservative prime minister's party) will probably be infuriated, but I hope it will be more preoccupied with its current splits."

Mr. Sinyurah, editor of the pro-PLO daily *Al-Fajr*, said "I hope everything goes well, the moment seems to have come to move forward." Ilyas Frayj, mayor of Bethlehem, pro-Jordanian leader invited to the conference, said he would announce whether he would attend or not later on.

An influential businessman from Nabulus, Sa'id Kan'an, said he would be present and added, "this is the first time we state together our wish for peace." Other Palestinians participating are businessmen, journalists, or university officials: Basil Kan'an, Mustafa Natshah, Sari Nusaybah, Ziyad Abu Ziyad, and Jack Khazmu.

Still other Palestinian nationalists refused to participate. The more radically pro-PLO editor of the weekly *Al-Awdad*, Radwan Abu 'Ayyash, told AFP, "I was consulted, and I would have nothing against this meeting if there weren't any pro-Jordanian elements in the delegation."

Basyuni: Solution to Arab Conflict Never Closer

TA250712 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] The Egyptian ambassador to Israel believes that the beginnings of a solution to the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries has never been closer. According to Muhammad Basyuni, an agreement on the procedures of the debate within the framework of a peace conference is within reach. He denied reports that Egypt had agreed to exclude the PLO from the negotiations.

HADASHOT: Decision Expected To Halt Lavi Project

TA241521 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 24 Mar 87 p 1

[Report by Ilan Kfir]

[Text] The argument over the merit of the Lavi project will end shortly. A decision is being formulated in the top ranks of the Israeli political and defense echelons to halt the project because of U.S. pressure and the astronomical cost of producing the plane. According to what is emerging, the decision may be made a month after the new chief of staff takes office, in other words, in about 2 months.

Senior figures are repeatedly expressing pessimistic views on the possibility of completing the project. This is mainly in view of recent strong hints from Washington that U.S. aid for the plane's development is to be stopped.

However, Israel may wait to make the official decision public until after Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin returns from Washington. Rabin, who is to go to the United States in May, will hold talks with administration heads and Pentagon staff regarding the Lavi.

As a condition for halting the project, Israel plans to ask the United States for compensation totaling some $500 million and a U.S. ccommitment to help establish an alternative technological infrastructure to provide employment to the engineers and technicians working on the project.

At the same time the decision is made to cancel the project, the Air Force will be asked to select one of the alternatives proposed by the United States. The emerging inclination is to manufacture the U.S. fighter plane, the F-16, here in Israel.

SLA Repels Terrorists North of Security Strip

TA241338 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1328 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Christian soldiers from the South Lebanese Army [SLA] this afternoon warded off a large terrorist offensive in the vicinity of Jabal al-Safhah, north of the security strip. Our correspondent in the north, Menahem Horowitz, reports that the terrorists directed RPG and light arms fire at Lahd's units, but Lahd's forces sustained no casualties.

Tehiya Faction To Work Against Unity Government

TA241900 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The Tehiya Faction says that from now on it will take action to overthrow the national unity government, contrary to the policy it has advocated to date, because things have changed. Each day this Cabinet continues to exist brings more danger and damage. Tehiya maintains that the Likud is not doing anything for settlement in the territories and that all the ceremonies recently mentioned are merely attempts to pull the wool over the people's eyes. The above was stated by Movement Chairman Knesset Member Yuval Ne'eman in explaining a no-confidence motion on the Cabinet, which was subsequently defeated. Minister Corfu responded on behalf of the Cabinet and said that the settlement plan's challenge is to inhabit Judaea and Samaria with 100,000 settlers by year's end.

ALGERIA

Former Minister, Others Freed From House Arrest

LD242225 Paris International Service in French
2030 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpts] All house arrest measures have just been lifted in Algeria. This apparently involves at least 22 people, until now forced to reside in the south of the country. The official Algerian press agency announces they all have been able to return home as of today. The authorities are giving no explanation for this move, in the same way that they did not comment on the house arrests. Among those affected are Mohamed Seghir Nekkache, a former minister under Ben Bella and his Swedish wife, (Ula Brita) and the lawyer Ali Yahia, chairman of the Algerian League of Human Rights.

[Algiers Domestic Service in French at 1830 GMT on 24 Mar in a similar report gives the following list of names:

"All the persons affected by the restrictive measures are to return to their homes as of today. This affects inter alia: Badjadja Abdelkrim; Kachid, Ali; Zertal, Hachemi; Nekkache, Mohamed Seghir and (Ekland, Ula Brita) his wife; Boukhari, Mohamed Nasserdine; Ali Yahia Abdenour; (Belil), Rachid; and Taybouni, Abdelkadar"][passage omitted]

KUNA Interviews President on Gulf War, Arab Issues

LD201729 Kuwait KUNA in English 1241 GMT
20 Mar 87

[Text] Algiers, March 20 (KUNA) — Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid Friday emphasized that his country is working quietly and diligently for halting the Iraq-Iran war and settling the dispute between the two warring sides by peaceful means.

The Algerian leader also reiterated his country's rejection of the use of violence in solving disputes and its opposition of the acquisition of land by force.

Bendjedid pledged that Algeria will quietly pursue its efforts to bring the two belligerents to the negotiating table and dismissed Algeria's siding with any of the two parties to the seven-year-old Gulf conflict 'because that will cause us to lose the opportunity for dialogue. Besides that we want to keep all channels open', he explained.

In a wide-ranging interview here with KUNA's board chairman, director-general, Barges Hmoud al-Barges, President Bendjedid called for collaborative efforts to end the Iraq-Iran war, rather than resting the burden of the assignment on Algeria alone.

Reviewing Algeria's mediation bids in Gulf hostilities, he said that Algeria, starting from its principled and consistent stand of opposing ethnic alliances, has taken the lead of hosting an Iraqi-Iranian meeting when a border crisis erupted between the two states and that meeting resulted in what became known as the 1975 Algiers Accord.

Bendjedid recalled that Algeria has lost its foreign minister, the late Mohamed Ben Yahya when his plane crashed in 1981 while heading to Tehran on a mediation mission.

Asked on prospect of inviting the Iranian and Iraqi presidents to meet in Algiers, the Algerian leader stressed that efforts are being exerted towards that end "but it is hard to speculate on others' response in the absence of elements of success and the lack of necessary conditions," he noted. Nevertheless, Bendjedid pledged that his country would use its friendship to talk with Tehran and Baghdad, discreetly and away from political publicity, to bring them to the negotiating table.

He called for collective efforts to stop this war, saying Algeria was doing everything "within our reach, without taking over responsibilities beyond our endurance or capability."

Denying that Algeria was exercising any pressure on any of the Gulf belligerents, Bendjedid said, "I do not think the war will stop if Algeria publicly stood at the side of any party against the other because that will cost us the chance of dialogue," adding "We are in favour of keeping channels open before all the (Gulf) parties."

On the present Arab situation and chances to hold an Arab summit, the Algerian president urged Arab leaders to tackle issues with a sense of responsibility and far-sightedness and in the context of ties of common destiny, which require constructive exchange and earnest work rather than a marginal approach and the use of divisive means.

He said that Arab leaders are unanimous on an early Arab summit once the necessary conditions are provided, adding he cannot predict a date for such a conference as efforts under way to remove obstacles would eventually determine the time, "and the venue will be no problem," he added.

About Egypt's return to the Arab fold, President Bendjedid expressed Algeria's reservations over restoring relations with Cairo without conditions, saying that would tantamount to admitting Arab injustice towards Egypt during its years of ostracisation.

He refused to recognize the de facto situation brought by the Camp David accords between Egypt and the Zionist enemy and explained that his support of continued dialogue with Egypt 'does not mean restoring relations. It is impossible for Algeria to see its flag hoisted aside the Israeli flag in Cairo while the Palestinian people are daily victims of displacement and genocide.'

President Bendjedid reiterated his country's commitment to Arab decisions and indicated that once the issue of Egypt's return is raised at the next summit "Algeria will have a position to state". He said that Algeria has urged Egyptian officials to take at least one step towards the Arab nation so that the latter can reciprocate, adding that it "is unreasonable for Egypt to remain static, as it is now, while asking the Arab nation to take steps in its direction."

Concerning his views regarding the Palestinian question and the current state of divisions among Palestinian commando groups, President Bendjedid reaffirmed Algeria's keenness on unity of the Palestinian revolution and its autonomous decision and cited his country's efforts aimed at re-uniting Palestinian ranks at least on the question of the political decision or the clear political stance.

Without such unity, he said it would be impossible for the Arab summit, once convened, to adopt a political decision in respect of the PLO's future, nor an international peace conference on the Middle East, whose idea is now more acceptable to concerned major powers, would be in a position to do so.

The Algerian president cited the negative impact differences among Palestinian ranks had left on Palestinian refugees as a whole, either inside the Israeli-occupied lands or domiciled in Arab states, as manifested in the camps war in Lebanon.

He refused Arab interference in Palestinian internal affairs, pointing out that this was one cause for "difference between us with some (Arab unnamed) parties", and said it was inadmissible for the Algerian liberation movement, which had previously shunned Arab and non-Arab attempts to impose their will, to support certain endeavours to impose certain names on the PLO's leadership.

On the situation in Lebanon and the entry of Syrian forces into West Beirut, Bendjedid expressed sorrow for the long ordeal of the Lebanese people and said his country has exerted constructive efforts with all Lebanese parties, Christians and Moslems alike, for solving the Lebanese crisis which he said the Lebanese themselves should do.

He added that Algeria has worked and coordinated with all those who want goodness for Lebanon and tried to "melt the ice between Syria and Lebanon and this had led to constant contacts between Lebanese President Amin al-Jumayyil and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, and this will be of positive influence on Lebanon and on the efforts for restoring national detente.

The Algerian president pointed out that Syria has an important role because of its position and its relations with Lebanon and is having positive influence in convincing all parties concerned of the need for national reconciliation.

Bendjedid emphasized that Algeria will continue to support the Lebanese people until they become able to solve their problems and end their state of division.

On the situation in Africa and its relations with the Arab countries, Bendjedid said the Arab nation should not live in isolation from the outside world or to remain hostage to its internal problems, though numerous and dangerous they are.

"This, however, should not make us forget the role of this nation in the world, and particularly in Africa to which a number of Arab countries belong, and we should not let the Africans feel that we do not need them except when we have problems that require their support," he elaborated.

The Algerian president regretted that the request of African countries to hold a joint Afro-Arab meeting to discuss issues of cooperation in general has not been realized "not for African reasons, but due to the Arab problems which are influencing our coordination with others."

He further said that some African states have restored relations with Israel and others are considering such a step "and this is not only the responsibility of those countries, but we shoulder the responsibility because we have abandoned them and we were involved in our internal problems and neglected our role in the African Continent and elsewhere."

Bendjedid went on saying that the role of the Arabs has also been reversed in the Non-Aligned Movement and the participation of the Arab leaders in the recent non-aligned summit in Harare was not substantial, which raised questions, particularly from the African side because the conference was convened in a sensitive area for the Africans. He stressed that the Arab representation at the non-aligned summit should have been on an acceptable level "because many countries want to make cracks in the movement's unity and its influence on the African, Asian, and Latin American causes."

Bendjedid noted that some member states of the Non-Aligned Movement have become under the mercy of foreign countries and international banks which are affecting and dictating even internal policies for those countries "because the commitment which had been shown in the past by the movement started to diminish for many reasons in a way that would lead to its weakness."

Answering a question on the internal affairs in Algeria, which is preparing for celebrating the 25th anniversary of its independence, the Algerian president said his country has exerted big efforts toward building the modern state "but due to the ambition of the Algerian people, who have the right in that, we can say that what has been done is insufficient."

Algeria had started from scratch in the economic field since there were no industries or educational institutions to serve the Algerians who were living as aliens in their homeland, Bendjedid recalled.

He pointed out that as for now "after the period in which no more than 500,000 Algerians were receiving education at schools, the number has jumped at present to more than six millions in schools, institutes and universities."

As for the economic and industrial sector, Bendjedid said a number of giant projects have been realized and Algiers is working for more absorption of modern technology "through building the human being who can deal with this technology and this can be achieved through developing the social and educational sides."

He pointed out that 35 percent of the state budget has been allocated for this purpose, and added that the development plans concentrate, in addition to the educational fields, the agricultural sector with the aim of realizing food self-sufficiency "in accordance with the slogans raised at previous party conferences since early 1980's, which call for working for the post-oil era, since oil is a resource given by God, that has positive and negative aspects."

Bendjedid said this concentration has been adopted after the Algerian society began to depend on this natural resource without paying care for other issues, but this concentration should not mean neglecting other sectors such as economy and industry, though we are witnessing a difficult economic crisis that is influencing the economies of the Third World in general and even the industrialized states.

He declared that Algiers has adopted a number of measures to face and control the challenges of the economic crisis before it reaches a point when it becomes difficult to solve.

Bendjedid stressed that no one is thinking of renouncing the basic principles of the National Charter approved in 1979, adding that re-evaluating the situation does not mean a retreat, but it aims to control the situation and to tackle problems and shortcomings.

In an answer to a question about the reason of the density of population in the Algerian cities, he said this phenomenon is due to the immigration from rural to urban areas.

He added that this immigration has caused some obstacles for future planning and said a number of measures have been adopted to encourage the Algerian citizen to return to the country and to develop the land, particularly in the southern areas, through extending loans and facilities for those who do so. [passage indistinct]

Answering a question on the Algerian-Kuwaiti relations, Bendjedid said "without flattery or exaggeration, relations between the two countries have positively developed in the past few years as a result of the willingness of the two countries and the strong political will of the officials in both states."

He further said "we have started to sense this endeavor recently in the form of projects which we approved, particularly after organizing the Algerian house and introducing reforms to allow for bilateral cooperation within the framework of joint establishments."

Bendjedid hoped that those projects would be followed by others in all fields and stressed that Algeria is prepared to consolidate bilateral relations not only in the political field, but also in the cultural and social sectors in interest of the two countries.

In an answer to a question on encouraging the private sector and the Kuwaiti companies to invest in Algeria, Bendjedid said there is a joint governmental committee that encourages that trend.

As for bilateral cooperation in the information sector, the Algerian president said there is a real shortage in the cooperation in the information and press field between the two countries, and pointed out that some Arab magazines depend largely when they write about Algeria on what is written in the Western and French press.

He added that though there are few people who write the truth, many want and seek to distort our image, and stressed that Algeria "is open for any Arab to know the truth about the development of the country without any disturbances, instead of depending on Western quarters."

These elements "do not want good for us, particularly regarding the issue of our civilization, or on those who have not yet absorbed the idea of Algeria's independence and are still working for defaming us by different means," Bendjedid emphasized.

Bendjedid Receives Letter From Al-Qadhdhafi

LD241035 Tripoli JANA in English 0942 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Tripoli, Al Marikh 24, *Jamahiriyah News Agency* — The Algerian president, Mr Chadli Bendjedid, received yesterday the envoy of the leader of the revolution. Mr Bendjedid received from this envoy a letter sent to him from the leader of the revolution.

LIBYA

Al-Qadhdhafi Interviewed by AL-HURRIYAH

LD250031 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic
2036 GMT 24 Mar 87

["Text" of interview with Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi published in "the latest issue" of *Al-Hurriyah*; date and place not given — read by announcer]

[Text] Question: The camps war has been going on for 5 months; there are some serious dangers behind the endeavor to penetrate the fortress camps from within after the Amal Movement failed to do so from outside. Furthermore, preparations are underway to fake a Palestinian-Palestinian struggle under the pretext of combating the 'Arafatists. What are the possibilities of putting an end to this tragedy and lifting the siege surrounding the steadfast gun in Lebanon?

The brother leader: Syria in fact holds the key to resolving the problem. She can put an end to this matter and halt the war of the camps; she can arm whoever she wants and disarm whoever she wants. We rely upon Syria to proceed from its revolutionary and unionist posture. For this reason we are trying as much as possible to deal with Syria on this matter. However, there is no question of our stance on the Palestinian issue; I support the Palestinian whether he is right or wrong. If I had to choose between an Arab country and a Palestinian I would stand beside the Palestinian, who is homeless, miserable, a fugitive, and who is primarily concerned with the problem. This is my stance; it will never change. We stand on the side of the camps and beside the Palestinians.

Question: Your call for Palestinian national unity in your March speech has received the Palestinian people's wide support. Comrade Nayif Hawatimah has announced the DFLP's full support for your call for unity. In your opinion, what are the practical steps needed to achieve PLO unity? Is there any coordination between you and [Algerian] President Chadli Bendjedid, who has made a similar initiative to sponsor a Palestinian national dialogue?

The brother leader: Undoubtedly the situation of the Palestinian resistance is bad; it weakens it, and nobody but the enemy benefits from it. There is no big problem that might hinder reuniting and reorganizing the Palestinian resistance under the

PLO's umbrella. I appreciate the Palestinians' position and the pressures being exerted upon them, and therefore, taking the pressures to which they are being subjected whether by Arabs or the enemy into account, we cannot hold them accountable for every stance they take in their effort to escape the calamity of the pursuit. The Palestinian is unjustly treated; he is banished from Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia, and he is chased by Arabs, Israelis, and the Americans. In fact, this pursuit and pressure explains the moves made by the 'Arafat leadership. I believe Yasir 'Arafat is looking for a foothold for his people.

The brother leader went on: Let us be frank so that there can be some benefit. Abu 'Ammar might have offered some concessions to eventually reach the West Bank, which would then be a base for the liberation of all of Palestine. The Israelis know this very well, and that is why they oppose the PLO's participation, even if this would appear a concession to us. The Israeli leaders affirm that the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip would be the beginning of the end for them; it would not be possible for such a state to coexist with the Israeli entity. This is the Palestinian revolution's plan, because when it is achieved work will begin to liberate Palestinian soil.

Question: Then there are no obstacles in your opinion to a Palestinian dialogue and the reunification of the organization after Al-Fatah announced its willingness to abrogate the Amman Agreement and introduce structural reforms, including a collective leadership for the organization on the basis of the Moscow and Prague agreements?

The brother leader: I believe the person with whom there should be no dialogue is King Husayn, because he is the one who has betrayed the cause; he is the one who is secretly dealing with the Zionist enemy and secretly met with the Israelis. He is the one who is concerned with his throne and remaining king; therefore, he resorts to all these treacherous maneuvers and secretly meets with the enemy. This is treason.

Question: What are your impressions of the recent meeting between you and the Fatah delegation?

The brother leader: I talked with the brothers in the Fatah Movement Central Committee and they gave me their opinion in a written memorandum. I found in it nothing of what is being repeated in some capitals regarding recognition of the enemy or a separate solution, not even with regard to UN Resolution No 242. The latter was mentioned in the context of a discussion on a solution based on all the UN resolutions, including the resolution on the partition project of 1947. It is impossible that the Americans and the Israelis would accept these resolutions and recognize the 1947 partition resolution. If we go back to the 1947 partition resolution, Resolution No 242 is invalid.

Question: What about the Cairo Declaration?

The brother leader: You know that we condemned the meeting with the Mubarak regime and the shaking of hands with Mubarak, who has recognized the Zionist enemy, and we considered it a deviation. But the Fatah leadership sees in this an implication of the Egyptian regime. 'Arafat went to Cairo, issued the Cairo Declaration and asked the Mubarak regime to caution him and bless him so as to obtain the recognition of the legitimacy of the struggle inside Palestine. This runs counter to the Egyptian regime's commitments with Israel and Camp David. Through his declaration, 'Arafat tried to place the Camp David signatories in opposition to each other.

Question: You recently invited a large number of Palestinian leaders to Tripoli and had a dialogue with them. Is this in the context of your call to unite Palestinian ranks?

The brother leader: The leadership of all the Palestinian detachments came to congratulate the Jamahiriyah on the 10th anniversary of the declaration of people's authority and we did not have time to meet them due to the large number of visiting foreign delegations. We invited them to come here after the celebrations to discuss the Palestinian situation and this discussion will focus on reuniting Palestinian resistance under the organization's umbrella.

Question: What about the Palestinian voices raised here recently which are saying, no meeting or dialogue with 'Arafat?

The brother leader: Palestinians must meet first. If 'Arafat is the problem and his treason established, let them meet, try him and remove him. [passage indistinct] Let us assume he is a traitor; try him at the national council. I do not believe the majority with him are traitors, because it is not likely that a majority would be traitors. Indeed, if he were a traitor the majority would overthrow him. Why should a whole people lose its way because of one person. Have a meeting with Palestinian organizations and try Abu 'Ammar. If this does not take place, then the issue is Abu 'Ammar personally, but it means that the cause is being plotted against.

Question: You recently called the Gulf war the mad war; how can this war be halted?

The brother leader: The Gulf war is an international conspiracy that benefits Israel and also is in the interest of the states that have an interest in the continued existence of the State of Israel, primarily the United States which concluded the known arms deal with Iran with the aim of eliminating the Iraqi Army and Iraq's strength because it constitutes a danger to Zionism. The United States wants to eliminate the Iranian revolution because it also constitutes a danger to Israel and U.S. interests. The Iranian revolution has disturbed, with its slogans and the martyrdom phenomenon which it unleashed, the positions of imperialism and reaction in the region. Therefore, they want to finish off this revolution; they want it to drown with Iraq in this crazy war.

Out of our care for the Iranian revolution, out of our concern for the Iraqi land and people, we want this crazy war to come to a halt. The Iranian leaders say their sole objective is to bring down Saddam Husayn's regime, but I fear the opposite will happen as a result of the war's continuation. I fear its continuation could lead to the fall of the Iranian leadership and that the Americans could bring a substitute leadership.

The brother leader of the revolution paused briefly and then said: I expect our Iranian brothers will disapprove of such talk and be cross, yet I once again say this is possible. I fear the contrary of what they want will happen, that this war will bring down the Iranian leadership. This would be a loss, as imperialism would have achieved its objectives by bringing down a revolutionary position in the region. Of course, I do not wish the fall of the Iranian revolution; I fear for it with the continuation of the war and I fear that the United States will replace the revolutionary leadership with what it calls a moderate leadership and end the war at its hands.

Question: What is your comment on the entry of the Syrian forces into West Beirut and the tasks which they have embarked upon? How do you see the solution of the excessive sectarian and denominational disintegration of Lebanon?

The brother leader: Syria is an influential party in the Lebanese arena and it is eager not to risk its national security from inside or outside. We care for Syria's security and see it linked to pan-Arab security. It has the legitimate right to preserve its security. As to the measures taken by the Syrian forces after their entry into West Beirut, I declared in my speech on 2 March that we have fears because of the closure of the offices of the national movement and its disarming in West Beirut because this may cause an imbalance in as much as on the other side of Beirut there are the Kata'ibs [Lebanese Front, a Christian group] and their isolationists with their weapons. As to the sectarian division of Lebanon. I believe no one single sect can rule Lebanon, unless it relies on an external support. Therefore, we find that most of the sectarian forces in Lebanon are backed with a Syrian, Iranian, American, or Israeli support. Each sect is seeking a force to rely upon and this has become an issue of blackmail and dirty trade in Lebanese politics. The drastic solution is to eliminate sectarianism. Of course, this cannot be done with a resolution, and there is no one who can eliminate it by force. What is intended is the elimination of the political role of sectarianism, that is, the elimination of the division between Sunni, Shi'ite, Druze, Maronite, and Catholic. Each one should pray in his own way and in accordance with his belief. But the political role of sectarianism must be eliminated. No one should be stopped from being a Druze, a Shi'ite, or a Maronite; what is intended is the elimination of sectarianism in politics. Here in Libya I say the elimination of tribalism, but this does not mean that the citizen no longer belongs to a tribe. The tribe exists, but we have eliminated its political role. In addition, we do not support the slogans that call for the creation of an Islamic or a Christian republic in Lebanon.

Question: Your recent speech included a responsible initiative to put an end to the internal war in Chad. You said Libya had no problem with any side in Chad and that the problem was with colonialism which has returned to Chad. Is there a move on the part of the Jamahiriyah to deal with the Chadian problem by peaceful means?

The brother leader: A year ago they carried out a U.S.-British-NATO aggression against the Jamahiriyah from the north. Now they are repeating the attempt from the south, from Chad, where U.S. and French forces are heavily present. After a long rivalry on our part at the level of the African Continent, we said we had no problem with Chadians; the problem is always with colonialism which has returned yet again to Chad represented in the U.S. and French military presence. We have declared our readiness to patronize a dialogue between various Chadian sides on the basis of the evacuation of French and U.S. forces. Recently, there was a meeting at which the Jamahiriyah and Sudan, which believes in dialogue, made efforts, and we are continuing these efforts to secure a reconciliation among Chadian brothers. However, France and the United States do not want reconciliation for Chadians because this would destroy the justification for their military presence. They want to occupy Chad. French troops have returned to Chad exactly as they were before 1960; that is, before its independence. They returned to occupy this country.

Question: The first anniversary of the U.S. aggression against the Jamahiriyah will be marked next month. What have you learned from the lessons of that aggression?

The brother leader: The first lesson is the need and inevitability of the unity of Arab peoples in the face of aggression. It is not possible to imagine that an Arab country would be attacked by the United States and Britain while other Arab countries remain neutral. When we were attacked by the 6th Fleet here, Americans should have been attacked by Tunisia, Morocco, and all Arab countries. It is a tragedy that dozens of planes crossed Arab airspace and struck here in the Jamahiriyah while the others watched as though it had nothing to do with them. The inevitable result of this weakness is that they will finish us off, one country after another. Even reactionary Arab leaders who consider themselves friends of the United States — their turn will come to be finished off by imperialism however much they lower themselves and compromise. Imperialism has no permanent friends except for Israel. The lesson learned is the need for Arab unity. There has to be a container that will absorb Arab capabilities. Rulers do not want unity and do not think about the future of generations. We are confident that the new generation will carry out a revolution of anger that will destroy the artificial borders and whoever defends these borders.

This was the text of the interview held by *Al-Huriyyah* magazine with the brother leader of the revolution.

London Arabic Paper Notes Rift in Iran Relations

PM211921 London Al-Majallah in Arabic 18-24 Mar 87 p 16

[Article by Salih Qallab: "Libya Draws Closer to Baghdad As It Distances Itself From Tehran"]

[Excerpts] Libyan-Iranian relations, which have flourished over the past 6 years and which have been marred only by minor events and incidents, have recently suddenly come into the limelight and become subject to questions and queries. Hints from any quarter now point in directions different from those of the past. Predictions now point to potential changes that might reverse the present formulas and change the map of the existing alliances, whether regarding the situation in Lebanon or the Iraq-Iran war.

The first signal in this regard came on the eve of the recent Islamic summit in Kuwait, when Libya suddenly announced an initiative to end the Gulf war following a statement from Colonel al-Qadhdhafi pointing to the futility of the war and the fact that it has become a burden on the Arab and Islamic effort for the liberation of Palestine and on the conflict between the Arab nation and the Zionist enemy.

Only a few days after this declaration, Libya — in the same manner in which it had announced its initiative proposing to deploy Islamic forces on the battlefronts to disengage the Iraqi and Iranian forces — retracted this initiative on the grounds that Iran had not just rejected the initiative but also unleashed its media in an intensified campaign against the new Libyan stands toward the Gulf war.

Although the Libyan media did not respond in kind to the Iranian press, this incident revealed that a new and different phase had begun with regard to relations between the two countries, that matters would not stop there, and that a map of new relations wouldemerge in the region including, in addition to Libya and Iran, Syria, Iraq, the PLO, and the parties to the conflict in the Lebanese arena.

Replying to a question from *Al-Majallah* regarding this development, an official source in Tripoli said Iran was not content with merely rejecting the mediating role Libya had adopted and the initiative Libya proposed to end a war which has been going on for more than 6 years. Indeed, Iran gave free rein to its papers to publish unobjective comments against this initiative. "Iran could have blessed, accepted, or rejected this initiative without comment and without launching media campaigns."

Certain indications regarding the map of alliances in question began to emerge following these developments. Things went from mild criticism via the media to practical moves. In the midst of all this, Colonel al-Qadhdhafi's speech on the 10th anniversary of Libya's change from republic to jamahiriyah and his remarks about the Gulf war and the shelling of Baghdad and some other Iraqi cities moved matters to another phase and opened the door to further developments to follow.

In his speech Al-Qadhdhafi stressed that as an Arab he cannot tolerate the shelling of Baghdad and that to attack Basra and its streets "is not a revolutionary action." As for the entry of the Syrian forces into West Beirut, Al-Qadhdhafi warned against the disturbance that might occur in the balance of power between the two parts of the Lebanese capital "as a result of us disarming the militias in West Beirut and closing their offices without similar measures being taken against the militias in East Beirut."

Moreover, Al-Qadhdhafi equated the attacks on the Palestinian camps in Lebanon and the shelling of Iraqi cities. He said: "The allegation that the attack on the Palestinian camps is aimed at toppling Yasir 'Arafat is like the allegation that the bombardment of Baghdad with missiles is aimed at toppling the Iraqi Government."

In this regard, the Libyan source in question confirmed that Libya will adopt a clear stand if the Iranian forces advance toward Basra and "that the occupation of any Arab territories is a matter concerning the dignity and honor of the Arab nation."

The source also said: "We completely reject the occupation of any Arab territories, whatever excuses are given to justify such an act."

It has been observed that the new development in the Libyan stand toward the Iraq-Iran war coincided with a similar development in the Algerian stand toward the war. *Al-Majallah's* information in this regard indicates, according to official Algerian sources, that Algeria, alongside its efforts to contain the Chadian crisis and normalize Tunisian-Libyan relations and Libyan-Palestinian relations, has also made efforts through direct contacts and visits to Tripoli by Foreign Minister Ahmad Taleb Ibrahimi and other Algerian officials with a view to improving the Libyan stand toward the Gulf to the point of restoring the previous Libyan-Iraqi relations. [passage omitted]

Some sources report that this step forward was achieved when a high-ranking Libyan official paid a visit to Baghdad which was shrouded in secrecy and silence during the last weeks of last month. Although these sources made no reference to what was discussed and agreed during this visit, the known facts and signs which can be deduced from the tone of the media indicate that the situation is moving from good to better and that the coming days might witness a major step forward in this direction.

A major indication is that the period when the moves and contacts in question were made witnessed contacts between the two fronts, the PFLP and DFLP (which are close to Libya) on the one hand and the Iraqi Government on the other. Some Palestinian sources believe that a PFLP senior official who has a close relationship with Libya recently made a secret visit to Baghdad and that the Iraqi officials he contacted in this regard expressed readiness to reopen the offices of the two fronts in question in the Iraqi capital.

The relations between these two fronts and Baghdad deteriorated during the early eighties following the eruption of the Iranian revolution, resulting in the closure of their offices for the past 6 years. But soon a new development appeared on the horizon when both fronts separately adopted a stand rejecting the continuation of the war and rejecting any Iranian occupation of any Iraqi territories.

Now and the light of the preceding developments, the question being raised is: How far can matters between Tehran and Tripoli go? Will the efforts being made by Algeria, the PLO, and other Arab parties change the previous equation and alter the old alliances map?

What is certain is that any estrangement between Tripoli and Tehran would lead to an equivalent, if not greater, rapprochement between Tripoli and Baghdad. What is also certain is that the shadows cast by the new situation between Libya and Iran did not emerge only after the campaign of criticism launched by the Iranian press against the Libyan initiative regarding the Iraq-Iran war, but in fact date further back — right back to the U.S. arms deal with Iran.

What further clouded the situation and confirmed the mutual doubts between the two countries was that the arms deal in question, according to the files that have been made public, coincided with the famous U.S. raid on the Libyan capital and a number of other targets, which resulted in the destruction of some schools, institutions, and civilian residential areas.

Although Tripoli maintained silence and chose not to express its view with regard to what happened in this regard, its violent campaign against the United States and its repeated hints confirmed that its confidence in yesterday's allies was beginning to falter and that its stand toward the Gulf war would not remain as it had been over the past years.

Here also remains the question of whether all these developments will push relations between Tripoli and Baghdad toward a return to the state preceding the estrangement.

The Libyan source referred to earlier, who wishes to remain anonymous, told *Al-Majallah*: "It was Baghdad that initiated the severance of relations with us, and it is now up to it to go back on its previous decision. We have no objection to having cordial relations with any fraternal Arab country."

JANA Editor Comments on U.S., French Role in Chad

LD250928 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0730 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Tripoli, 25 Mar (JANA) — JANA's political editor has made the following comment in response to statements made by the French defense minister to Radio Europe 1 and by the French minister of cooperation to AFP:

First: France has admitted that it has a secret agreement with the agent Habre to liberate what it calls Chad's northern regions from occupation. This acknowledgement confirms that France has been working from the beginning toward the escalation of the military situation in Chad in a way that exceeds its claims of an agreement justifying its intervention in that country.

Second: According to the defense minister's statement, France is fighting with all its energy north of the 16th Parallel, contrary to the statements by officials in France from Mitterrand to the defense minister. [sentence as received]

Third: Under cover of these new developments, France has violated its repeated confirmations that it will not go beyond the 16th Parallel to the north and that its presence south of this line is related to deterrent factors and safeguarding the presence of its forces.

Fourth: French intervention has exceeded all the parameters announced by the French Government. It has become clear that France and the United States, by allocating roles, are implementing their schemes to attack the Jamahiriyah using Chad as the starting point.

Fifth: The Jamahiriyah is working toward national reconciliation and encourages the mediation efforts being made within the framework of the OAU and an African will that is independent of all colonialist pressures.

Masses Celebrate Victory Over U.S. 'Terrorism'

LD241103 Tripoli JANA in English 0840 GMT 24 Jan 87

[Quotation marks as received]

[Text] Tripoli, Al Marikh 24, *Jamahiriyah News Agency* — The masses of the basic nationalist and internationalist people's congresses on the land of Great Jamahiriyah and everywhere on earth, all the progressive forces, the national liberation movements, the free and honest people of the world are celebrating today one of the victorious days [words indistinct] our great people has registered against the U.S. empire of evil and terrorism in the gulf of defiance, the Libyan Arab Gulf of Sidra.

JANA's local affairs editor commented on this occasion by saying:

"Our masses, which are entitled to be proud, have the right to [words indistinct] victory slogans, for the 24 of Al Marikh — March — 1986 was not an ordinary day similar to those days history registers with all idleness. That day did not pass like any other day, for on such a day the sun had risen sending a bright golden ray carrying good omen to all the progressive forces of the world which stand in confrontation with imperialism [words indistinct] and greed.

"For in that day the Arab people in Libya baptised with its [word indistinct] blood the Gulf of Sidra" and named it "the gulf of defiance" in confirmation to its biggest challenge to imperialism and to assert its determination to defend its rights against all evil aggressors".

The editor added: "On 24 Al Marikh last year the whole world was asserted that there is a small people numerically, strong in its will and that is the Libyan Arab people, has fought an immortal battle against U.S. tyranny which rightly represents the barbarism of the era in all the meaning the word carries.

A year ago, history registered for Libyan Arabs a score in victory by breaking the American nose and putting it in the muds of the Sidra shores. That American who was motivated by illusions of power madness when its vision was blinded by its love to dominate others and spread his influence over them...but the world witnessed that day the Libyans repulsing the U.S savage aggression against the "gulf of defiance" [words indistinct] coverage so that their bloods mingled with the gulf's waters to turn them into "sacred waters" that cannot be ignored or treat them with indifference or bargain about them. "The Libyans' defence of the sacredness of the gulf and their offerings of martyrs in the process of protecting their borders alone, but they were in that day defending the honour of the Arab nation [words indistinct] the Libyans were defending in that day a geographical region of the big Arab homeland and were paying with their blood in the process and that is the greatest of jihad".

JANA's local affairs editor asserted that the Gulf of Sidra — the gulf of defiance — will remain an unseperateable [as received] part of the Libyan Arab territorial waters whether the Americans like it or not. "The Libyans, whose bloods have mixed a year ago with the waters of the Gulf are ready to repeat the deed a second and third time until the world knows what force moves such people which believes in its rights and defends them".

He said: "If Americans are not wise after taking the bitter cup they drank in the gulf of defiance a year ago, then the Gulf's fish which got used to the taste of their flesh will be waiting, as we will be, anytime and anyhow".

Concluding the editor said: "The sacrifices the Libyan Arab people has offered has (?asserted) reality of the Arabism of the Sidra Gulf as an inseperateable [as received] part of the Libyan Arab land except in one case: When the globe vanishes and its parts spread in the universe.

"Those sacrifices assert Great Jamahiriyah's absolute sovereignty over its gulf and its legitimate right, by law and by conviction, to defend it as any other fierce of its Arab land. [sentence as received]

"We who live the glory of this day must salute the great leader, his soldiers and his brave officers — the vanguards of the armed people who are fighting with honour and bravery the battles of freedom who offer continuous giving to defend liberty that was asserted by people's authority."

SUDAN

Minister: Libyan Presence 'Does Not Affect' Ties

JN241454 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1423 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Khartoum, 24 Mar (SUNA) — Energy and Mining Minister Adam Madibu said today that Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's statement before the Constituent Assembly yesterday about the presence of Libyan forces on Sudan's western border with Chad does not affect Sudanese-Libyan relations.

In a statement today, the minister added that the Libyans know Sudan's neutral position, pointing out that what the prime minister said is not new to the Libyans. He denied the possibility of resorting to military steps and said the government will exert diplomatic efforts to remove the Libyan forces from Sudanese territory.

He pointed out that the presence of the Libyan forces is not aimed at invading Sudan, but is due to military circumstances forcing them to move there. He said Libya's policy toward Sudan is unchanged. Dr Madibu recently visited Libya where he held several meetings with officials.

Al-Mahdi Speaks on Administration of South

EA242150 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic
1520 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Speech by Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, prime minister and defense minister, to the Constituent Assembly on 23 March on the administration of the south — recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate. [passage indistinct][passage omitted] When it changed the status of the southern region by means of imposition from above, the May regime violated the Constitution. Thus, we in the transitional government found ourselves caught between this constitutional heritage and a political heritage created by the new reality. [passage omitted] Thus, what we inherited from the transitional regime was a higher executive council in Khartoum unable to act as [words indistinct] and military governors in the three southern regions. This is the reality and the form this government inherited.

When we sought to act within it, we were faced with an absence of the institutions to which the 1972 law related, while we also faced a new political reality. For example, many elements, particularly in Equatoria region, refused, for political reasons, to entertain any form of a united south. [passage omitted]

After consultations, we agreed on representation by the five southern parties represented in the Constituent Assembly, the Presidency, and the government, namely: the [southern Sudanese] Political Association; the African People's Progressive Party [as heard]; [Sudanese People's] Federal Party; [The Sudanese] African Congress Party; and the Progressive People's Party. [passage omitted]

From the beginning, it became clear that there were two views: One side wanted to retain the higher executive council with all its powers, and the other rejected the whole concept of a unified south and wanted three regions. The first side said: We are committed to the unitary form. The other side said: The political situation has superseded the legal situation. The divergence between the two sides was great, to the extent that they even refused to sit down together.

We stressed the following to them at dozens of meetings: First: Unlike the defunct regime, this government does not want to split the southern political forces, but is working to unite them. Second: On the southern question, the government is obliged to adhere to the provisions of Article 16/2 of the Constitution and to those of the 1972 Southern (?Autonomy) Law. These provisions must be upheld because of the new political reality and the absence of politically agreed institutions. This is why we continue to observe the existing legal provisions governing the relationship between the center and the region.

[Words indistinct] in the reality of the south. This must be based on an agreement between the southern parties, so that politically agreed institutions replace those which are absent. As soon as the political parties in the south reach an agreement within the framework of the provisions of the Constitution and the law, the government will implement that agreement. But the southern parties have failed to agree. [passage omitted]

Despite the fact that the southern Sudanese political association is represented in the government by Aldo Ajo [Deng], he opposed the resolution of the council of ministers and threatened to submit a constitutional case and so on.

Despite all this, we had a meeting with Samuel Aru [Bol] and Peter Gatkuoth [Gwal], who said they, as the southern parties, could reach an agreement, provided the government delayed its decision for 2 weeks. We agreed. Then we requested that government use [word indistinct] its ties with the southern parties. It agreed and we also agreed. We then appointed a mediation committee from the two parties to work toward bringing the views of the southern parties closer together. We waited until 18 January 1987, which was after the lapse of the 2-week delay, when a message arrived from Samuel Aru saying they were proceeding toward an agreement but needed more time. I also agreed to that.

Then the following developments occurred: First, on 19 January 1987, I received a charter signed by three of the parties represented in the government, in addition to two other parties which had so far neither participated in the government nor in the earlier consultations, even though they had regularly participated in the meetings of the party chairmen with the prime minister which were held monthly at the Constituent Assembly. These were the parties of peace. The other parties mentioned as being represented in the government were the Progressive People's Party, the Sudan African People's Congress Organization and the [Sudanese People's] Federal Party. These were the parties which signed the charter. [passage omitted]

I have not yet studied the charter, but I have heard that although the southern parties agreed on some important points, they came to a standstill on the powers, formation, and presidency of the joint southern council. After a joint meeting with all groups, I appealed to them to find a solution, but they explained to me that meetings between the various parties had become impossible. [passage omitted]

What is clear is that these parties presented a joint charter, which constitutes a positive and progressive step. They have the right to this [word indistinct] and I will study all the possibilities for rectifying the matter.

Brother speaker, the latest development in the situation is that the political association and the federal party have split, with one taking up the position of supporting and the other of opposing the new situation. The position is as follows:

1. All the southern parties have accepted the establishment of a joint southern council, but differ with regard to its powers. The law currently being drafted will define these powers as those laid down in Article 16/2 of the Constitution and in the 1972 Regional Autonomy Law, with appropriate amendments necessitated by the absence of relevant institutions and the presence of a new political reality.

2. All the southern parties are agreed that decentralization should continue in the three southern regions, and that posts in the [word indistinct] should be held by appointees from such parties and political coalitions as are relevant to each of the regions.

3. All the southern parties are agreed that establishing a higher executive council constitutes an impossible [word indistinct] from both the legal and practical viewpoints.

4. All the southern parties are agreed that these arrangements are temporary and transitional.

5. All the southern parties are agreed that it is now their duty to bring about relief for the citizens of the south and to prepare for a national constitutional conference.

I believe, brother speaker, that we have made good progress, but the divergence I have already mentioned remains. At this point I wish to say the following:

First: The government will not accept vacuums or delays which create unwarranted problems. The new situation which has arisen, however, certainly constitutes a step in the right direction as opposed to that of military governors and the isolation of all the political forces (?in the southern regions).

Second: The chairman of the current higher southern council [Matthew Obur Ayang] is an independent individual and a former elected chairman of the southern peoples council, who is well known for his patriotism and [word indistinct]. His fellow council members are drawn from a very broad spectrum of southern parties and tribes.

Third: The opposition will face an enacted law determining the chain of responsibilities, starting with the council of ministers and devolving on to the southern council and the regional governments.

Fourth: With regard to the actual composition of the council and the regional governments, it will be possible to distribute the relevant posts equally between the mutually opposed parties, even if it proves impossible to unite them. Even if this should prove impossible, then it will be possible to arrive at another formula to bring about their participation.

Finally, I have elaborated these facts to make the Constituent Assembly aware of every detail and to convince it that we have not taken a single step aimed at weakening or dividing the ranks of the southern political forces. On the contrary, our constant aim has been to create the broadest possible basis of harmony between them.

I request that you do the following:

1. Understand the steps taken by the government to establish the transitional government in the south; understand the government's motives in this respect; and understand that we have achieved what is feasible.

2. Appeal to the two mutually opposed parties — the Southern Sudanese Political Association and the Federal Party — to unite their ranks and to revise their attitudes toward the new administration, thereby to [word indistinct] act to normalize work and life in the south and to prepare for the national constitutional conference.

IMF Currency Devaluation Request Rejected

JN241324 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Khartoum, 23 Mar (SUNA) — In its negotiations with an IMF delegation here today, Sudan explained that it does not accept devaluation of the Sudanese pound due to the negative effects this would have on the Sudanese economy. This was evident from past experience, which clearly proved the failure of devaluation. The IMF delegation has approved Sudan's approach not to discuss removing subsidies from certain commodities.

This was announced by Dr Bashir 'Umar, finance and economic planning minister and head of the Sudanese side to the negotiations, in a press statement following today's session. The finance minister said Dr 'Abd al-Shakur Sha'lan, director of the IMF Middle Eastern Department and chairman of [words indistinct] that the new IMF director supports Sudan's economic policies designed to end its economic crisis. This support will be focused on two fields: First, convincing financiers to extend additional funds to Sudan; and second, supporting Sudan in repaying its debt arrears.

The finance minister said Dr 'Abd al-Shakur Sha'lan, head of the IMF delegation, conveyed an invitation to him from the IMF director to meet with him for further discussions on the Sudanese economic policies to tackle the Sudanese economic crisis during a meeting by the World Bank and the IMF Interim Committee in Washington on 9 April in the presence of Arab and African finance ministers. The minister pointed out that the talks with the IMF also dealt with the short-term rescue program [previously] submitted to the IMF as well as the general objectives of the 4-year rescue program currently being prepared. The minister said [word indistinct] the IMF endorsed Sudan's trend toward development, stressing the IMF's support for the objectives mentioned in the short-term program. The minister said: What is needed now is to reach agreement on a general framework for the policies designed to achieve these objectives. He added that Dr Sha'lan affirmed the possibility of dispatching an IMF team to Sudan to help it in this task.

The finance minister said the negotiations endorsed the government's financial performance in the previous period, particularly relating to borrowing from the bank system, spending, and revenues. He explained that the IMF delegation stressed the need to create new sources of revenues to fill the gap in the current budget. The minister said the World Bank's reform programs were also discussed. The pricing policies and their effect on the shortage of commodities and the black market were also discussed. He said it was decided to further discuss this issue with an IMF delegation which will arrive in the country at a later date. The minister also said the currency exchange rate was discussed. The IMF delegation endorsed the government's export incentives policy in light of the Council of Ministers' recent decisions. He added that it was also decided to further discuss the details of these decisions. Negotiations between the two sides will continue tomorrow, Tuesday.

SPLA Reports Anti-Government Attacks 13 March

EA242229 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in Bari 1120 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpts] Panjak — SPLA fighters from various units mobilized themselves and carried out an attack on a government army post at (Pam Azaraf). During a 3-hour battle, Sadiq lost 7 soldiers and 11 militia. Another 15 militiamen and government soldiers were seriously wounded. Among the dead was a lieutenant colonel.

According to the SPLA correspondent in the area, many of themilitia are now in hiding, waiting to join the gallant SPLA fighters. The correspondent added that some militia are, however, in the company of government soldiers and are hiding in foxholes, just waiting for the SPLA to dig them out. [passage omitted]

Bor — Fifteen SPLA fighters from Hadid battalion attacked government soldiers between Totali and Malwal Chat at 1300 on 13 March. Two enemy soldiers were killed and a vehicle was destroyed. [passage omitted]

SPLA fighters attacked government soldiers at Mabior Kech at 2200 on 13 March. Five enemy vehicles were completely destroyed. Four other vehicles were pushed into the river by the enemy soldiers themselves and one vehicle laden with foodstuffs and ammunition was burnt by the SPLA. Several enemy soldiers were killed and many others seriously wounded. [passage omitted]

CAR

Parliamentary Elections Scheduled for July

AB241808 Paris AFP in English 1607 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Bangui, March 24 (AFP) — The first parliamentary elections in the Central African Republic for five years are to be held in July, Head of State General Andre Kolingba said here Tuesday [24 March].

He was addressing a special meeting of the Provisional Executive Committee of the Democratic Central African Rally (RDC), the country's only political party.

Under the constitution, approved by popular referendum last November, candidates selected by the party are approved by universal suffrage for a five year term.

The Provisional Executive Committee was appointed by Gen Kolingba, who is also head of the party, after the 842 delegates at the RDC's founding meeting in February failed to agree on a list of candidates to a permanent committee.

The last elections were held in 1981 under the regime of David Dacko, who ousted Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa with French aid in 1979. The elected assembly never sat, however, and the constitution was abolished after President Dacko gave up power to Gen Kolingba.

Bokassa Urges Former French Ministers To Testify

AB221312 Paris AFP in French 2016 GMT 20 Mar 87

[Excerpts] Bangui, 20 Mar (AFP) — Former CAR Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa, at the 54th hearing in his trial before the Bangui Criminal Court today, appealed to Yvon Bourges and Jean-Francois Deniau, both former French ministers, to testify before the Court that the two DC-3 and DC-4 aircraft given by France when he was head of state were, in fact, personal gifts.

I appeal to France's ambassador to inform the French Government that the testimony of these two former ministers is needed to corroborate my ownership of these two aircraft, stated the former emperor, who had just been accused before the Court by Alphonse Koyamba, his former deputy prime minister, of diverting these two aircraft for his own benefit, to the detriment of the state. [passage omitted]

General De Gaulle, he explained, through his minister Yvon Bourges, handed over to him a fully equipped DC-4 in recompense for the services rendered to France. [passage omitted] Later, the overthrown sovereign continued, Georges Pompidou had given him a DC-3 for his birthday. It was his minister, Jean-Francois Deniau, who had delivered it. [passage omitted]

CHAD

Libyan Losses in Ouadi Doum Fighting Reported

AB250905 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 0530 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Communique No 57 issued by the FANT High Command on 24 March in Ndjamena]

[Text] As we announced on the evening of 22 March 1987, the gigantic Libyan base at Ouadi Doum, the strongest and deadliest enemy base on Chadian territory, has since that date been under the control of the incomparable and irresistible FANT. Here is [words indistinct] provisional tally of the fighting:

On the enemy side: 1,269 Libyans killed, including Colonel Kadim Ali Abou Nawar, deputy commander of the zone; 438 Libyans taken prisoner, including Colonel Khalifa Aboul Kassim Aftar, commander of the zone.

The following equipment was captured: 11 L-39 bombers, 2 Marchetti bombers [as heard], 3 Mi-24 combat helicopters, 66 BMP tanks [as heard], 42 T-55 tanks, 18 BM-21 Stalin's Organs [multiple rocket-launchers], 12 T-62 tanks, 8 (?Cascavel) armored vehicles, 12 SAM-6 carriers, 4 SAM-10 batteries, 4 Su-23 tanks, 6 complete radar units, 10 (?BTR's), 44 106-mm cannons, 16 24-mm cannons, 36 14.5-mm cannons, 6 Berdel armored vehicles, 112 heavy duty trucks and tankers, 128 Toyota vehicles, 12 ambulances, a sizeable supply of fuel, ammunition, food, and drugs, 8 generators, and reinforced military engineering equipment. The following equipment was destroyed: 4 L-39 bombers, 2 Tupolev-22 bombers, 1 Mig-21 bomber, 2 large Antonov aircraft, 4 Marchetti bombers [as heard], 3 combat helicopters, 54 BMP tanks [as heard], 47 T-55 tanks, 8 BM-21 Stalin's Organs, 12 122-mm cannons, 12 (?Cascavel) armored vehicles, 8 surface-to-surface [as heard], 3 Su-23 tanks, 1 SAM-6 battery, 22 23-mm cannons, and 16 14-mm cannons.

On the allies' side: We regret the deaths of 29 martyrs, who died honorably on the battlefield, and the wounding of 58 others. Equipment destroyed: (?two) 23-mm [word indistinct], one Toyota equipped with Milan missiles, one Toyota equipped with surface-to-surface missiles, eight vehicles, and one [word indistinct] hit.

This is the partial and provisional tally of the fighting between the valiant FANT and the Libyan soldiers at Ouadi Doum.

Immortal glory to our martyrs who fell on the battlefield!

French Officials Comment on Role in Fighting

Aurillac on Air Force

LD240950 Paris International Service in French 0800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Following the Chadian capture of the Libyan base of Ouadi Doum, the Libyan Air Force yesterday raided this base situated in northern Chad, an operation in which a Libyan fighter is reported to have been shot down. This latest victory for President Hissein Habre does not, however, mean the conflict is over. In this connection, France says it has no intention of changing its position. Here is what French Cooperation Minister Michel Aurillac said to Paris Radio.

[Begin recording][Aurillac] For the Chadians, Chad has internationally recognized borders, and we have always said: The Chadians should be in Chad. We have only said that the 16th parallel was the limit beyond which, until further notice, we would not use the French Air Force for offensive actions.

[Correspondent] But, if they need our help beyond the 16th parallel, will we provide it to them?

[Aurillac] The Chadians are already beyond the 16th parallel: The Chadians are practically everywhere from Zouar to Ouadi Doum and Fada. They are engaged in heavy guerrilla actions against the Libyan rear. And, today, we can say the last Libyan base, that of Faya Largeau, is entirely surrounded, so there is no problem of the 16th parallel for the Chadians. As for us, our Air Force has still not intervened north of the 16th parallel and will not until further notice. [end recording]

Aurillac on Military Aid

AU241619 Paris AFP in English 1613 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Paris, March 24 (AFP) — The taking last Sunday of the Libyan base of Ouadi Doum by Chadian Government forces was a further example of the increasing aptitude of Ndjamena since December to face the formidable Libyan arsenal in northern Chad, experts said here Tuesday.

"The fall of the main Libyan stronghold in Chad takes on an obvious strategic significance," French Cooperation Minister Michel Aurillac told *Agence France-Presse* Tuesday.

He said the recent Chadian successes were due to the country's "broad popular revolt against a foreign invasion."

Military experts said the Chadian Government's recent change in fortune was based on the following factors:

— The rallying to the government side of 1,500 to 2,000 fighters loyal to former opposition leader Goukouni Oueddei, thus depriving Tripoli of its "eyes and ears" in the ravaged regions of northern Chad.

— The delivery to Ndjamena by France of some 250 million francs (42 million dollars) of anti-tank and anti-air weapons since December, and by the United States of some 15 million dollars in emergency military aid over the last three months.

— The deployment south of the strategic 16th parallel of the French "Epervier" anti-aircraft and logistical system.

Mr. Aurillac said the strategic importance of the fall of Ouadi Doum lay in the fact that the last large Libyan strong-hold in northern Chad, at the palm grove of Faya Largeau, 150 km (90 miles) to the southeast, was now isolated.

"The numerical balance of forces in northern Chad was unfavourable to Ndjamena," added Mr. Aurillac, "but the morale of the Chadians, who are real desert raiders, is extraordinary."

The minister marvelled at the expeditious capture of Ouadi Doum, reportedly taken in 90 minutes despite its impressive airfield and defences including 250 tanks and armoured vehicles, heavy artillery and missiles.

Experts underlined the fact that Libyan troop units, heavily mechanized yet lacking motivation, usually operate under heavy air cover. Chadian troops, more mobile, resort to guerrilla warfare.

Mr. Aurillac said the Chadians no longer feared Libyan air power as they did in 1983, when Libyan warplanes drove them "rapidly out of Faya Largeau."

"Chadian troops ... now have anti-aircraft weaponry and SAM-7 missiles, taken from the enemy," he added.

Mr. Aurillac said more than 20 Libyan planes and helicopters had been shot down since the end of last year. "Even if the Libyans still have over 100 planes, they now only operate from high altitude, which reduces the efficiency of bombing raids," he said.

He said France assured the security of Chad below the 16th parallel, thus allowing Ndjamena to launch attacks in the north.

"Our decision to reconstruct the airport at Abeche, in the east close to the Sudanese frontier, proves our determination to aid Chad on a long-term basis and that we will not abandon our air cover," he said.

Giraud: No French Troops Used

LD241618 Paris International Service in French 1245 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text][Announcer] Minister of Defense Mr Andre Giraud stated on Europe No 1 radio this morning that no French soldiers took part in the battle at Ouadi Doum:

[Begin recording][Giraud] It is primarily a Chadian victory, and one has to stress that above all. It was a highly motivated, well-trained, well-equipped Chadian Army, endowed with remarkable tactical capability, that won everything.

[Reporter] What is the volume and nature of French assistance?

[Giraud] Our assistance consisted, esentially, in protecting the unskilled part of Chad, the part that had not yet been invaded; we also formed, trained, and armed the Chadian Army, and then we supplied it with the necessary logistics for this desert war.

[Reporter] With rockets [fusee]?

[Giraud] Yes, that is what played an essential role.

[Reporter] Not only vehicles?

[Giraud] Yes, I heard with a little [words indistinct] that you spoke about Toyotas. The Toyotas did play a role, but there were also many French vehicles, armored ones — and above all MILAN's. The MILAN's are what destroyed the many tanks and armored vehicles that the Libyan Army had at their disposal.

[Reporter] And you confirm that there was no direct intervention by French soldiers?

[Giraud] No French soldiers took part in this battle. [end recording]

[Announcer] The Chad-Libyan conflict also risks repercussions on relations between France and Sudan. In fact, Sudanese Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has stated, and I quote, that French Air Force planes violated Sudanese airspace while keeping a watch on Libyan troops that were in northwest Sudan. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs denies any violation of Sudanese airspace. The Ministry of Defense has decided to open an investigation. We go back to Andre Giraud who also spoke on this point to Europe No 1 radio this morning:

[Begin recording] [Giraud] There was indeed a Libyan column in Sudan posing a threat from the east. We did move our Epervier force to be ready for all eventualities, and we kept a watch on the border. Was there a slight overstepping [of the airspace] over this Libyan column? That is what Sudan has just said. We are looking into it.

[Reporter] What do you mean, you are looking into...

[Giraud interrupting] We are carrying out an investigation to find out whether a navigational error of a few kilometers led to a small overflight of Sudan. It is possible, and if it happened, we will apologize to the Sudanese Government. [end recording]

Tripoli: GUNT Crushes Attack at Ouadi Doum

LD250237 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic
2000 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpt] In a vindictive and heated propaganda campaign against the legitimate GUNT, the BBC, Voice of America, Deutsche Welle, Egyptian, French, Dutch, Swiss, and Zionist radios simultaneously and in the same form reported fabricated and false news about imaginary victories of Habre's gang at Ouadi Doum.

VOGAH has commented on these claims and false rumors. It said: It is a source of the greatest pride for Bardai radio to be the subject of a hasty attempt to prevent its voice from being heard and its truth from being known by imperialist and reactionary radios, and for Bardai radio's voice to rise above the voices of the BBC, VOA, Deutsche Welle, Egyptian, French, Dutch, Swiss, Zionist and other radios.

VOGAH added that the GUNT forces have achieved decisive and brilliant victories over the past weeks between Ouadi Doum and (Ouadi Namous) and in Kokou Angrana, Greda, Arda, and Tina. This made the French, U.S., and Zairian forces and intelligence in Chad organize an operation for show on behalf of Habre's gang, to attack Ouadi Doum in a desperate and open attempt to stop the morale of Habre and his gang from deteriorating and collapsing, and to compensate the gang for its great losses. However, this failed attempt was crushed by the GUNT forces. [passage omitted: praise for GUNT's heroism and loss of loyalty to Habre; the desperate state of Habre's men; biased reporting of Western and reactionary media]

Militants Stage Support March for FANT

AB241747 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French
1330 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Excerpts] A (?mammoth) demonstration was staged this morning in Ndjamena by the militants of the National Union for Independence and Revolution [UNIR] following the victory won by the Chadian National Armed Forces in Ouadi Doum. [passage omitted] Jealous of their independence and liberty, and determined to (?safeguard unity) among Chadians against (?the destabilizing maneuvers) of the slave-trading regime of Tripoli, the UNIR militants (?massively came out) to express their loyalty to the head of state and the FANT. [passage omitted]

The demonstrators were led by the regional UNIR committees of Ndjamena, Chari Beguirmi, and Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti [BET]. Also present at the square were some members of the cabinet, [word indistinct], and UNIR Central Committee, as well as the Zairian ambassador, who made it a point to express the active solidarity of the Zairian people with the Chadian people. The march ended at 0945 at the Independence Square, (?which was full of militants). [passage omitted]

Guara Lassou, the UNIR executive secretary [minister of foreign affairs], was present along with members of the UNIR Central Committee, cabinet, and [word indistinct]. To begin with, El-Hadj Ousmane Drissa, the general secretary of the regional UNIR committee for Ndjamena, on behalf of the regional committees of the Chari Beguirmi and BET, read the motion meant for the head of state and the FANT. In the motion, Comrade El-Hadj Drissa encouraged the FANT to continue in their efforts, and stressed the importance of the war efforts to deal with the Libyan aggressor forces once and for all. [passage omitted]

Comrade Goura Lassou clearly and strongly replied to the motion. According to him it is time to stop giving speeches and start taking action.

[Begin Lassou recording] Comrade UNIR militants: The UNIR founding chairman, occupied by his heavy responsibilities, has charged me with welcoming you and receiving the motion that you have just handed over to me. Comrade militants, as I told you on 6 January 1987, it is time to stop giving speeches and start taking action, and the FANT have been proving and showing it every day, mainly yesterday by capturing the stronghold that the lunatic of Sidra has built on our territory. Through this victory, the Chadian people have defended their own cause. Comrade militants, the victory that the FANT has just won is a significant step toward the total liberation of our territory. To all those who have not understood or who cannot understand, we say: [shouted slogans indistinct]. To all those who have not understood or who do not want to understand, we say: [shouted slogans indistinct].

Comrade militants, we have said that the slave traders must be tracked down wherever they may be. This is what has been happening on the fronts. The aggressor forces are tracked down everywhere by the valiant FANT. [shouted slogans] They will no longer be left alone. [shouted slogans] Al-Qadhdhafi no longer sleeps. [shouted slogans] Al-Qadhdhafi is now spending sleepless nights. Thanks to the Almighty's will, Aozou will soon be freed. The comrade president taught us that equipment means nothing, but what is important is man as well as his way of tackling a problem. [passage indistinct] We say that we must continue the struggle, for we still have a long way to go. There are people who are still in the pay of Libya. The comrade president has instructed us to watch and combat them. [shouted slogans] We (?warn) the traitors who are hiding here with superficial smiles [words indistinct] [applause], we must (?expose) and crush them. [words indistinct] We must (?teach) the sense of dignity to those who want to live united. We must impose freedom on those who want to live in (?Chad) [sentence as heard]. We must fight against those who commit injustice.

Comrade militants, we will soon launch the final attack. We must all — because we are all soldiers — prepare for the final attack and defend the victories we will have won. Comrade militants, we shall continue to remain mobilized and vigilant, for an injured madman is always dangerous. We must attempt to get rid of Al-Qadhdhafi for good. [applause] As I have just said, now is the time for actions and not for speeches. I will faithfully convey what you have (?pointed out through) your motion to the comrade president, who has been following hour after hour not only what is going on on the fronts but also what you do here in Ndjamena. He will convey your encouragements and support to the famous FANT. We will prove and we must prove to Africa that Chad, which is the heart of Africa, must not be [word indistinct]; we will teach dignity to Africa. [applause] Those who in the past [word indistinct] should be ashamed because Chadian children will defend (?their fatherland through) their own efforts. [applause]

Comrade militants, thank you. We will (?win)! [applause and and singing of national anthem] [end recording]

GUNT Reports Attack South of 16th Parallel

AB242025 Paris AFP in French 1959 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Excerpt] Paris, 24 Mar (AFP) — The new GUNT asserted on the evening of Tuesday, 24 March, that its commandos have infiltrated south of the 16th Parallel, the line separating the opposing forces in Chad, and have inflicted human and material losses on the Chadian Government forces in the Iriba District near Biltine in the center-east and the Sudanese border.

A group of commandos attacked Iriba District on Monday, 23 March, killing 25 soldiers and capturing several others, Facho Balaam, the new GUNT's minister of foreign affairs, said in a telephone conversation with AFP from Tripoli. He said that several other commandos are operating in that region and that fighting is also going on in the Ouadi Doum region, the large Libyan base in the north that was captured on Sunday, 22 March, by Hissein Habre's forces. Facho Balaam added that Acheikh ibn Oumar, president of the new GUNT, who overthrew Goukouni Oueddei, has gone to Ouadi Doum. [passage omitted]

Bardai Claims 'Ambush Behind Enemy Lines'

LD250726 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 0215 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Radio Bardai, the organ of the legitimate GUNT, broadcast a communique by a military spokesman saying that yesterday a special GUNT forces unit set up an ambush behind enemy lines on the (Aba Chariba) road, which resulted in the destruction of two vehicles and the killing of 14 soldiers of the agent Habre. The unit returned safely to base.

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Spanish Foreign Minister Begins Visit 22 March

LD221816 Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 1700 GMT 22 Mar 87

[Text] Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez today began an official visit to Equatorial Guinea at the invitation of his counterpart, Marcelino Nguema. He will be attempting to relaunch Spain's bilateral relations with this African country. This visit is taking place 2 and 1/2 months after the Spanish Aviocar accident in Bata, in which 22 people died. The causes of the accident have not yet been clarified.

At the end of his visit to Guinea, the Spanish foreign minister will travel to Mauritania.

Meets With Spanish Envoys

LD231643 Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 1300 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez, who arrived yesterday on an official visit to Equatorial Guinea, this morning held a meeting with 13 of our country's ambassadors in the sub-Saharan region of Western Africa. During this visit the prospects for increasing the Spanish presence in this region, in both the political and commercial fields, were examined. Spain maintains intense cooperation with Equatorial Guinea, which is expensive but necessary for political interests, according to official Spanish circles. The external aid to Equatorial Guinea is the largest our country grants and comes to some 2 billion pesetas annually for technical aid. The Equatorial Guinean external debt, just as far as Spain is concerned, amounts to 8.5 billion pesetas, which is (?used to help) the country's payments problems.

GHANA

Soviet Friendship Delegation Concludes Visit

AB241920 Accra Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The three-man Soviet delegation from the USSR-Ghana Friendship Society has left Accra for home after a week's visit. The delegation led by the minister for irrigation and water resources, Dr Vladimir Loginov, was in the country at the invitation of the Ghanaian-Soviet Friendship Society. Mr Loginov said the visit has exposed them to the socioeconomic and political trends in Ghana. He said he is happy that Ghanaians understand and support the initiative of the Soviet Union toward disarmament and global peace. While in the country, the delegation called on government officials and signed a cultural agreement with their Ghanaian counterparts. Among the delegation was a Soviet cosmonaut, Mr (Valery Dikopsky).

LIBERIA

Doe Appoints Acting Ministers, Other Officials

AB242156 Monrovia Radio ELWA in English
2000 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] As you may have heard in the headlines, a number of new appointments have been made in government by President Samuel Kanyon Doe. For details here is Bob Tsemgbey of our staff.

[Begin Tsemgbey recording] It was reported by the national radio that the president of Liberia, Dr Samuel Kanyon Doe, has made the following appointments in government pending their confirmation by the national legislature:

- Mr John Bestman, acting minister of finance
- Mr (Emmanuel T Boya), acting minister of information
- Mr William Johnson, acting minister of planning and economic affairs
- Mr Paul Jeffy, acting governor of national Bank of Liberia
- Mr Emmanuel O. Gardiner, acting director of the budget
- Mr Robert Tubman, acting minister of labor
- Mrs Alicia Johnson-Francis, acting managing director of Liberia Produce Marketing Board
- Mr Thomas D.Hansen, acting deputy minister of finance for expenditure
- Mr (George Bollo), acting chairman, National Investment Commission
- Mr Francis L. M. Horton, acting deputy governor of the National Bank
- Mr (David Farhat), acting deputy minister of finance for administration
- Mr (Toho Gbargai), acting adviser to the president on national and international affairs
- Mr Gbai M. Gbala, acting managing director, LISDA [expansion unknown]
- Mr (Samuel D. Brunnel), acting minister of rural development
- Mr (Emmanuel Kay), acting deputy minister of rural development
- Mr (Isaac Wild), acting deputy minister of justice for legal affairs
- Mr (William Bow), acting deputy minister of foreign affairs
- Mr Francis Boma, acting managing director, LICO [Liberia Industrial Corporation] [end recording]

NIGERIA

Army Chief Says Army Unaffected by Riots

AB242009 Kaduna Domestic Service in English
1700 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The chief of Army Staff, Major General Sanni Abacha, says the religious crisis in parts of Kaduna State has no bearing on the Army. Declaring open the Protestant church and mosque at the 82d Division of the Nigerian Army, Enugu, Gen Abacha reminded the soldiers of the role they are expected to play, which include the promotion of peace, unity, and stability in the country. He said the Army should not allow unscrupulous people to mislead them and plunge the country into confusion. According to Gen Abacha, Nigeria is a secular country where freedom of worship is guaranteed in our constitution.

In his speech, the general officer commanding the 82d Division, Brigadier Oladipo Diya, advised the soldiers to avoid acts capable of causing disunity and religious strife.

Committee Hears Testimony on Religious Riots

AB241855 Kaduna Domestic Service in English
1700 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The chairman of Jema's Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Barnabas Pikaweh, has identified rumormongering as a major tool escalating crises in the country. Testifying before the Kaduna State Committee on Riots and Disturbances in Kafanchan today, Mr Barnabas Pikaweh blamed the escalation of the crisis on media reports which he said were inciting. The chairman said the police could not cope with the situation because people in villages believed in the rumor that their brothers and sisters were being killed. This resulted in mass mobilization and subsequent marching into Kafanchan. Mr Pikaweh advised that religious and traditional rulers should improve on the role they play in the maintenance of peace in the country.

He alleged that the people of Southern Zaria have for long nursed grudges against the distribution of amenities in the state. These include lack of benefiting from scholarships, and uneven distribution of institutions of higher learning. In his testimony, the acting registrar of the college, who was the most senior officer at the time of the crisis, Mallam Yahayah Ballah Garba, disagreed with the claim that the area was denied of amenities.

Meanwhile, the committee on the disturbances has declared wanted, two principal actors in the Kafanchan crisis. They are Reverend Bakoh, whose quotation of the Holy Koran annoyed the Muslim students; and (Aishaka Garba), said to have mobilized the students for the crisis. This followed a police declaration yesterday that the two were yet to be found. The cassette containing Reverend Abubakar's (?preaching) has also not been produced as directed by Governor Abubakar Umar.

Testifying before the committee yesterday, the students affairs officer, College of Education, Mallam Lawal Garba, blamed the crisis on the quotation from the Koran. He, however, commended the Christian students for heeding to appeals for peace, unlike their Muslim counterparts whom he said were not ready to compromise. According to him, crisis spread to the town when the Muslim students, who were marching through the town, were assaulted by some people.

In his testimony, the provost of the college, Mr (David Djibrim Degad), suggested that religious activities be banned in institutions of higher learning throughout the federation. Mr (Degad) said certain individuals use such fora to forment trouble. He pointed out that, (?although) the crisis spread to all the parts of the state, there was nothing sinister behind it. The provost disclosed that he was away in Maiduguri during the crisis, and admitted that it was wrong for his subordinates to call religious leaders instead of the police when the crisis had gotten out of hand.

One of the victims who testified accused the police of not containing the crisis and allowing it to escalate. One of the them, a teacher with the government secondary school in Kafanchan, Mallam Rilwanu Shaibu Shittu, believed that the religious disturbances, which spread to parts of the state, had nothing to do with the College of Education's crisis. This is because the situation at the college was brought under control immediately. He therefore urged the committee to fish out those who masterminded the crisis and bring them to book. He also expressed concern with the inability of the security agents to uncover the planned activities of those behind the crisis in advance.

The Imman of Jema's Central Mosque, Mallam Bakoh Mohammed, advised that alternative land be made available to those living within the College of Education, Kafanchan premises, to forestall the destruction of public property.

Earlier, the chairperson of the committee, Mrs (Ansen Sunday), had warned that members would not entertain hearsay stories from anyone. She therefore advised the victims to limit themselves to what they saw during the crisis.

BBC Reports UK Visa Office Reopening in Lagos

AB230820 London BBC World Service in English
0730 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] Nigeria and Britain have resolved the 6-week-long dispute over the new British visa office in Lagos. The office is reopening today but will share its workload with a second building elsewhere.

Nigeria closed the new office last month, saying it caused traffic congestion close to the headquarters of the military government. The BBC West Africa correspondent says the dispute cast a shadow over relations between Britain and Nigeria, and thousands of applications were held up in the process.

Visa Processing Resumes

AB241536 Lagos Domestic Service in English
1500 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The British High Commission has resumed issuing visas in Lagos to Nigerians wishing to travel to the United Kingdom. The issuance of visas in Lagos was suspended over 1 month ago following a Federal Government order to the High Commission to close down its consular office on Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos. Visa applications are now received at the High Commission at Eleke Crescent, Victoria Island, while the processing is done at the Awolowo Road consular office where applicants collect approved applications.

The first secretary at the British mission told a Radio Nigeria correspondent that the High Commission had arranged for buses to convey applicants from its Eleke Crescent office to Awolowo Road for interviews when necessary.

Joint Commission With Bulgaria Opens Session

AB240915 Lagos Domestic Service in English
2100 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Excerpt] The first meeting of the Nigeria-Bulgaria joint commission opened in Lagos today and will last 5 days. In a message to the session, the minister of external affairs, Prof Bolaji Akinyemi, asked the two delegations to consolidate [as heard] on the existing areas of cooperation. They should also examine the possibilities of further collaboration in agriculture and natural resources, trade, industry, petroleum, and petrochemicals, as well as mines, car, and steel. Professor Akinyemi said the delegations should come up with programs worthy of implementation within the shortest possible time to enhance the economic benefits of the two countries.

Responding, the Bulgarian vice premier [title as heard], Grigor Stoichkov, said his country was ready to render assistance on a mutually beneficial basis for the realization of the structural adjustment program. [passage omitted]

Import Agreement Reached

AB241755 Lagos Domestic Service in English
0600 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Bulgaria said she is willing to sign an agreement with Nigeria to import some of her products. Items she has to import under the plan include manufactured and semimanufactured goods, agricultural produce such as cocoa, cotton, kolanut, rubber, coffee, as well as hides and skin. The Bulgarian vice premier, Mr Grigor Stoichkov, said yesterday at the opening of the Nigeria-Bulgaria joint commission that his country would continue to render economic assistance to Nigeria. He called for a meeting between representatives of the Bulgarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Nigerian Association of Chambers and Commerce, Industries, and Mines. The vice premier also proposed that the next meeting of the joint commission be held in Sofia, the Bulgarian capital, next year.

Fuel Shortage Worsens in Lagos, Other Cities

AB232054 Lagos Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] The fuel scarcity, which was first noticed in Lagos last week, seems to be getting worse. Many filling stations in the metropolis are without petrol, and this has resulted in long queues of vehicles in the few stations that have. Some of the petrol dealers, who spoke with our correspondent, blamed the situtation on reduced supplies from the fuel depots. They claimed that supplies from the depots had become irregular and that the quantity supplied had been reduced in anticipation of the speculated withdrawal of subsidy by the government.

Last week, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation [NNPC] attributed the scarcity, which is also being experienced in Ilorin, Benin, and a few other cities, to reduction in crude oil allocation for domestic consumption by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC]. The NNPC also said the situation was being compounded by hoarding and smuggling. It said the minister of petroleum resources had directed that the quantity of crude oil processed for domestic use be increased from 255,000 barrels per day to 290,000 barrels. Before the OPEC measure, Nigeria processed (?224,000) barrels of crude oil per day for local consumption.

SIERRA LEONE

Momoh Answers Questions on Possible Coup Plot

AB241644 London BBC World Service in English
1515 GMT 24 Mar 87

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[Text] President Momoh of Sierra Leone is probably still pondering the violent events of Sunday night [22 March]. Security forces raided the houses of a police superintendent, Joseph Kaikai, and his wife, a former government minister. A considerable cache of arms and amunition was found; 20 people are under arrest; and the speculation was that it was part of a conspiracy to topple President Momoh. On the line to Freetown, Kobina Mensah asked President Momoh how far the plot had progressed:

[Begin recording] [Momoh] Late on Sunday, we got a piece of intelligence to the effect that there was a group of people in the west end of Freetown who were planning to cause trouble that very night.

[Mensah] What sort of trouble were you expecting on that Sunday night?

[Momoh] well, we were told that they were in a house, and they were well armed. So naturally, we brought the security forces together and instructed them to go and investigate what was happening there. And as soon as they got there, there was shooting from within, and a driver of one of the (Bisicus) special security division personnel was shot and killed instantly. The security forces in the instance had to return fire, and a gun battle went on for some time.

[Mensah] It has been thought that the plot was actually to assassinate you. Is that correct?

[Momoh] Well, I am not in a position to say that. In fact, I think we must agree that it is the matter that is being investigated by the police right now, and I cannot definitely say that.

[Mensah] There are also reports that among the weapons found were things like rocket launchers, submachine guns, and even missiles. Surely, this must have been preparation at least for a coup attempt against your government?

[Momoh] Well, it may well be, but that will come to light very soon when the investigations actually get fully under way.

[Mensah] To your knowledge so far, were there any people involved in the plot other than police officers? Were there civilians involved?

[Momoh] Yes, yes! In fact, there are civilians, and I even understand that up to this point, something like three or four soldiers have been named.

[Mensah] So it wasn't just a police plot; there were members of the armed forces involved as well?

[Momoh] Definitely.

[Mensah] Surely, this must be very worrying for your government. I mean, how do you intend to stop this from happening again?

[Momoh] Well, in fact, the people who have been arrested so far are definitely going to be given a very fair trial; and once the courts are able to establish what the real position is, appropriate action will be taken. In other words, those who are found guilty naturally will be dealt with most drastically, and if there are some among them who are not found guilty, then of course, they will be released.

[Mensah] Nevertheless, behind every coup plot there are usually civilians providing money. Who do you think were the civilians who were backing this attempt against you?

[Momoh] Well, I am not in a position to know exactly who they may be. But judging from the description that has been given to me about the type and the quantities of arms and amunition discovered at that house yesterday, one can safely affirm that there must be some influential people behind it.

[Mensah] Surely the fact that this plot could have got so far indicates that you have a security problem.

[Momoh] Well, not exactly, not exactly. At least we've been able to prove that at least the arms and ammunition were not obtained from military sources because the military have checked their own arms and amunition and everything is intact.

[Mensah] So these arms were all brought into the country from outside?

[Momoh] Well, that is a fair possibility.

[Mensah] Do you know where from?

[Momoh] No, I am not in a position to say. I am not.

[Mensah] You spoke about arms coming in to Sierra Leone from outside the country. Do you suspect that the people behind this plot are the exile groups who are based abroad?

[Momoh] That again is very difficult to say at this initial stage. Perhaps after a day or two when some of the facts are unravelled, we may be able to know that.

[Mensah] Is it not rather surprising, President, that arms can be found in the house of a former minister in your government?

[Momoh] No! Well, in fact, to be very very fair to the lady, it will be most unfair to actually connect her at this stage. One, for a start, she is not even in the country; and she has been out of the country for months on medical grounds. She is in Britain right now. So I don't think it will be fair really to connect her.

[Mensah] Isn't it rather convenient that she is out of the country at the moment?

[Momoh] [words indistinct] I know for sure she left here a few months ago purely on medical grounds. [end recording]

ANGOLA

Czechoslovak Trade Delegation Tours Namibe

MB181611 Luanda Domestic Service in Portuguese 1200 GMT 18 Mar 87

[Text] A delegation from the Czechoslovak Central Council of Trade Unions, led by (Ledivia Zibiko), has been on a 3-day visit to Namibe Province within a framework of strengthening friendship between the two central trade unions. During its stay in Namibe, the delegation met with the Namibe provincial secretariat of the National Union of Angolan Workers [UNTA] and discussed issues related to the lives of the two countries' workers. It also visited the (Rodemina) Mining Industry where it had an on-the-spot tour of the enterprise. In Namibe, the delegation, accompanied by the provincial UNTA officials, visited the Tombua fishing municipality and toured all fishing production units. During its visit, the delegation familiarized itself with the primary concerns of the workers. It left a message of support, noting that despite difficulties resulting from the war imposed on us by racist South Africa, the people are determined to carry on with their objectives.

Mozambican Parliamentarian Meets Assembly Head

MB241403 Luanda Domestic Service in Portuguese 1200 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Marcelino dos Santos, the chairman of Mozambique's National Assembly, has been in Angola for several days on a working visit within the framework of exchanging experience between the two countries' parliaments. Marcelino dos Santos was recently received by People's Assembly First Secretary Comrade Lucio Lara. A press communique from the People's Assembly points out that both officials exchanged information on the functioning of parliaments in their respective countries. Before the audience, Marcelino dos Santos visited the installations of the 10 December Palace of Congresses.

COMOROS

Federal Assembly Elections Said 'Totally Rigged'

AB241308 Paris AFP in English 1007 GMT 24 Mar 87

[By Eric Sauve]

[Text] Moroni, March 24 (AFP) — The new parliament in the Comoros, the Federal Assembly, will have no opposition members, according to unofficial results after Sunday's poll whose fairness has been bitterly criticised.

For the head of state of the Indian Ocean archipelago, President Ahmed Abdallah, it just proves that "there is no opposition, only the dissatisfied", as he commented to *Agence France-Presse*.

There was no doubt here that most of the 42 seats at stake would go to candidates supported by the president, but no one imagined that the opposition would be officially credited with nothing at all. The results have brought charges that the poll was totally rigged by the authorities.

President Abdallah had said that the elections would be "free", although candidates would stand as individuals. Opposition parties are banned and the official Comoran Union for Progress is moribund.

The president's supporters were assured of a majority, however, after all other candidates were disqualified in two of the three islands making up the archipelago, Anjouan and Moheli, which return 22 of the deputies in the Assembly.

In the main island, Grand Comoro, candidates of the various opposition tendencies, most of which had a loose electoral pact, stood in each of the 20 constituencies, and they showed their determination to win at the opening of the campaign on February 20.

On Sunday evening, after the polls closed, Finance Minister Said Ahmed Said Ali, one of those elected, even said on the official Radio Comoros station that an opposition candidate, Ali Bazi Selim, had won a seat. The minister said this was proof of "great democracy", but the same radio station reported the following day that Mr Selim had in fact been defeated.

In an open letter leaders of the unofficial "Opposition Union" called the elections "a grotesque masquerade exposing the anti-democratic and dictatorial nature of Ahmed Abdallah's regime." The opposition leaders, including former Prime Minister Ali Mroudjae, and several of the principal candidates, cited the Supreme Court ruling disqualifying them in Anjouan and Moheli, and the "confiscation" of polling cards. This deprived most of our electors the right to vote and enabled supporters of the regime to vote several times, the letter claimed.

Observers here had no doubt that the election contained flagrant irregularities, and some wondered why the president had bothered to hold it at all.

Others familiar with the Comoros argued that in fact the "Abdallah system" was "relatively democratic", given the nature of the archipelago's feudal society headed by dignitaries and other prominent personages. They said that the president had consulted hundreds of such people before deciding who to choose. The search for a consensus in this way was thus a form of "direct democracy" in a political system based on patronage, though far removed from a Western-type election.

Comoran society, based on age-old customs and traditions, itself has little in common with modern industrialised nations, the president's apologists say.

For President Abdallah, slated by his opponents as a dictator kept in power by the foreign mercenaries who officer his personal bodyguard, the reality is that each of his opponents is after his job.

"There are perhaps eight or nine who want to succeed me in 1990", when under the Constitution he must stand down, he said.

MALAWI

Mozambican Youth Leader Leaves After Visit

MB242049 Blantyre Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] (?A member of the Political Bureau) of the Frelimo Party, Mr Zacarias Kupela, has gone home after an official visit to Malawi, during which he attended the inauguration ceremony of this year's (?youth wing). Speaking on departure in Lilongwe today, Mr Kupela, who is chairman of Mozambique's Youth Movement, said he was impressed with what the youth of Malawi are doing toward the social and economic development of the country. He said during the visit, he discussed with officials of the Malawian Pioneers the possibility of introducing youth exchange visits, which would help promote cultural and economic relations between the two countries.

MOZAMBIQUE

Council of Ministers Holds Seventh Session

MB241851 Maputo Domestic Service in Portuguese
1730 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] At its seventh ordinary session in Maputo today, the Council of Ministers examined our country's participation in the donor's conference to be held on 31 March in Geneva, Switzerland. The Mozambican delegation to the conference will be headed by Prime Minister Mario Machungo. The seventh ordinary session of the Council of Ministers also examined the report of the fourth meeting of the Mozambique-USSR Joint Cooperation Commission, which was held in Maputo recently. Ongoing talks between Mozambique and the IMF were also examined.

NAMIBIA

School Desegregation Tests Government Credibility

MB241359 Johannesburg SAPA in English 1357 GMT
24 Mar 87

[By Johan van Heerden]

[Text] Windhoek, March 24, SAPA — For more than a year at the focus of political contention, the question of the desegregation of schools in SWA/Namibia is coming to a head — placing the territory's transitional government before the most crucial credibility test in the 21 months of its existence.

The schools issue also threatens with demolition remaining statutory discrimination in SWA/Namibia without recourse to the territory's constitutional council, plagued by controversy and largely invisible action to date.

In the latest development in the schools dispute, the SWA-/Namibian National Assembly approved in Windhoek yesterday a report by a mandatory standing committee on fundamental rights, which noted that laws were invalid on any level of government where they restricted entrance to schools on the criteria of race and colour.

The report recommended that second-tier ethnic authorities, particularly the administration for whites, should amend immediately their education ordinances to conform with the territory's bill of fundamental rights. In failure of that, the SWA-/Namibian Cabinet should approach the Windhoek Supreme Court for a final ruling.

The report was approved after a division of votes, in which the all-white SWA National Party [SWANP] and the Rehoboth Liberated Democratic Party opposed to the other four political partners in the transitional government.

Only 11 days before, the ruling SWANP in the second-tier authority for whites lost vote for the first time in 37 years in its legislative assembly when a motion was carried calling for the abolition of race and colour as norms for enrollment of pupils at schools under the control of the whites administration. Three SWANP members voted with the seven members of the opposition Republic Party to score a majority of three.

The desegregation of exclusively-white schools in SWA/Namibia was contained in a unanimous transitional cabinet decision last year in March and reinforced by a unanimous cabinet decision in September.

The support for the cabinet resolution by the chief SWANP delegate to the transitional government, Mr Eben van Zijl, led to his leaving the cabinet at the end of January in consequence of "differences of interpretation" of party policy, according to a statement by the SWANP leadership. Mr van Zijl has since been heading a non-political organisation, Action National Settlement, aimed at promoting economic development among impoverished communities.

Announcing and reiterating the cabinet's commitment to open schools to all races from this year, the minister of national education, Mr Andrew Matjila, stated that strict entrance requirements would be maintained.

Prospective pupils at registration had to be proficient in the language of instruction at schools, they had to conform to minimum academic and age requirements to be admitted to any particular school standard, and they had to reside within a specified distance of schools they wanted to attend. "There will be no lowering of teaching standards and there will be no busing," Mr Matjila said.

The SWANP firmly resisted the central government's proposal, particularly through its present cabinet delegate, Mr Jannie de Wet, and when schools reopened at the beginning of this year, white classrooms and playing fields remained prohibited terrain for black and brown school children.

In December last year, a legal way out of the impasse was offered in a judgment delivered by a full bench of five judges of the Windhoek Supreme Court.

Reading out judgment remarks, the judge-president of SWA/Namibia, Mr Justice Hans Bekker, reminded the transitional government that it was under legal obligation in terms of the South African State President's Proclamation R101 to review and abolish legislation that clashed with the bill of fundamental rights contained in the proclamation.

A standing committee had to be formed as an important instrument to consider such laws, the court said, but it emerged after the court ruling that no such committee had been convened.

Proclamation R101, which instituted the transitional government on the June 17, 1985, enjoined the cabinet to submit for a final decision to the court laws deemed incompatible with the fundamental rights bill, according to the courts ruling.

The fundamental rights committees report was tabled last month, and it would appear at this stage a foregone conclusion that the administration for whites would not amend its education ordinance to allow children of other race groups to attend white schools.

The SWANP leader, Mr Kosie Pretorius, said after his party's defeat in the white legislative assembly on March 13 that his administration would continue to manage its schools as before, until a congress of the SWANP decided differently.

His remarks came under considerable criticism by political opponents who argued Mr Pretorius was elevating a political party organ to a status above that of a government instrument such as the representative authority for whites.

Pronouncements by Mr de Wet yesterday strengthened views that the SWANP would not strike down racially-restrictive measures in its education legislation.

Mr de Wet said in debate that the education policy of the whites administration was not in conflict with the rights bill, and in any event schools were a constitutional issue that had to be decided by the constitutional council.

In such a deadlock, one alternative for the cabinet at central government level would be to let the Supreme Court decide whether schools should be opened to all race groups in view of the stipulations of the fundamental rights bill.

Political analysts accept that if the court should rule in favour of the desegregation of schools, the automatic tumbling down would be imminent of all remaining statutory discrimination, including Proclamation AG 8 (1980) which institutes and maintains second-tier ethnic authorities in SWA/Namibia.

The last alternative for the SWA/Namibian cabinet is to take half-hearted or no action at all, contrary to its own decisions, in spite of the recommendations by the fundamental rights committee and the Supreme Court ruling, and in spite of the resolution yesterday by the central government's legislative arm.

If that should happen, the transitional government in SWA/Namibia would stand discredited internally and abroad once and for all, no matter how cleverly public relations cosmetics were applied to repair its scars, said senior government sources and critics alike.

SOUTH AFRICA

Government, Banks Agree on Debt Repayment

MB241816 Johannesburg SAPA in English 1815 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Pretoria, March 24, SAPA — South Africa will repay 13 percent of the 13 billion dollars left in the standstill net to its foreign creditors over the next three years, in terms of an agreement reached today in London between the debt standstill coordinating committee and the major creditor banks.

Finance Minister Barend du Plessis announced the new arrangements at a press conference held in Pretoria today.

He said the second interim debt arrangements covering the period July 1 1987 to June 30 1990 were substantially a continuation of the existing arrangements.

Commenting, SA Reserve Bank Governor Dr Gerhard de Kock said today was "a good day for South Africa."

South Africa also owes 10 billion dollars in medium-term liabilities which fall outside the debt restrictions. These will be repayable on the normal maturity dates, in terms of the loan agreements.

The 13 per cent to be repaid amout to 1420 million U.S. dollars.

Mr du Plessis said 5 per cent — or 508 million dollars — would be repaid during the second half of this year.

During 1988 3.5 per cent — 400 million dollars — would be repaid, during 1989 3 per cent — 346 million dollars would be repaid, and during the first half of 1990 1.5 per cent — 166 million dollars — would be repaid.

The committee, chaired by finance director-general Dr Chris Stals, reached the agreement with 34 of South Africa's major creditor banks, which are owed almost 80 per cent of the money.

Mr du Plessis said the agreement was being offered to the rest of South Africa's 333 creditors involved in the standstill, and it was expected that they would endorse it.

South Africa would also continue to repay debt which fell outside the next, for example to the world monetary fund.

"We believe that the available foreign reserves of the Reserve Bank, which increased by about 800 million U.S. dollars during the past two months, and the expected continued surplus on the current account of the balance of payments, will be sufficient to meet these commitments," he said.

He said the arrangement reflected the goodwill between the negotiators, and hoped it would further bolster confidence in South Africa.

The attitude towards South Afria was now much more relaxed, and South Africa would no longer find it as difficult to meet its commitments as in the early days of the standstill.

Mr du Plessis said there had been no political pressure during negotiations, and Dr Stals reported that not a single political demand had been made.

Dr de Kock said the arrangement was a "very good deal" for foreign banks if one considered the actions of other indebted countries.

Mr du Plessis said South Africa already repaid 5 per cent of its indebtedness in terms of the first agreement, which expires on June 30 1987.

The country's total foreign debt — calculated at current exchange rates of about 48 U.S. cents per rand — amounted to 23 billion U.S. dollars.

But although South Africa repaid more than 3 billion U.S. dollars of the 24 billion dollars owed at the time of the unilaterally declared debt standstill at the end of August 1985, its debt decreased by only 1 billion dollars due to the dollar's decline in this period. Had the dollar not declined South Africa would have owed just over 20 billion U.S. dollars now, Mr du Plessis said.

He said he wanted to dispel the notion that central government owed all the money.

Of the 13 billion U.S. dollars in the debt standstill net the public sector owed only 3.5 billion U.S. dollars — the other 9.5 billion U.S. dollars were owed by the private sector.

Of the 10 billion U.S. dollars outside the net, the public sector owed 7 billion U.S. dollars and the private sector 3 billion U.S. dollars.

Mr du Plessis said the following first interim debt agreement arrangements were included in the new agreement:

— Margins on interest rates on restricted debt will remain the same as those agreed upon in 1986;

— South Africa will continue to pay all interest on foreign debt;

— Foreign creditors retian the right to cede their restricted claims on South Africa to other foreign creditors under certain conditions;

— Foreign creditors may also, under certain conditions, substitute another person as a South African debtor;

— The public debt commissioners will continue to act as a reservoir to absorb restricted foreign funds in cases where the existing debtors no longer need the funds; and

The differentiation between "inside the net" and debt "outside the net" will be retained according to the definitions that applied previously. Debt outside the net will be repaid on the original maturity dates.

New provision include:

— A revised 'exist clause' enabling foreign creditors to convert short-term claims inside the net to long-term claims — or shares — outside it;

— Creditor banks agreeing to roll over loans until June 30 1990; and

— Annual consultations between the committee and a representative technical committee of the foreign banks.

The arrangements would be reconsidered prior to its expiry.

Mr du Plessis said: "These arrangements confirm South Africa's continued willingness to maintain good relations with its foreign creditors and to meet its foreign commitments in an orderly way."

The agreement also obviated the attachment of South African assets abroad.

Dr de Kock said there had been another "large increase" in South Africa's gold reserves and assets abroad this month.

Buthelezi Appeals for Help To 'Defuse' Violence

MB241806 Johannesburg SAPA in English 1804 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Ulundi, March 24, SAPA — The Kwazulu chief minister, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, today appealed to leaders of "all organisations to come together in an attempt to defuse" the violence tearing the country.

In a general response to media queries concerning the death of seven youths in KwaMashu near Durban recently, Chief Buthelezi said he "deplored all violence."

"I deplore all violence and earnestly appeal to leaders of all organisations to come together in an attempt to defuse the situation — not only in Natal/KwaZulu but elsewhere in the country.

"I would be prepared to give my whole-hearted support to such an effort," he said in a statement to SAPA.

"In many instances we do not know whether recent murders are the result of so-called "political" assassinations or other internecine aggressions. The situation has become very clouded although there is little doubt in my mind that this spiral of death and destruction was initially politically motivated and it is now clearly out of control."

Chief Buthelezi said criminally motivated elements were also blamed for the violence. They "appear to be playing a role," he said.

"The time is long overdue for organisations to sit down and work out ways and means of encouraging peace and decent and civilised behaviour.

"If all those caught up in this ghastly situation do not want the terror to continue, if they do not want to score bloody political points, then now is the time for hard work by all for the common good," he said.

"We need to reach out and help the men, women and childen who have suffered enough under apartheid and who now are in a grip of terror of another kind."

He said he found the violence "appalling and reiterate once again that Inkatha is not committed to making South Africa ungovernable and is committed to non-violence and negotiation."

He added: "Inkatha's leadership has never, ever, endorsed violence."

He said Inkatha's stand had always been that of encouraging all political groups to work in a multi-strategy approach against the evils of apartheid and the racist policies of the South African Government.

"I have also held the belief that Inkatha's 1.3 million members have an inalienable right to defend themselves and the aims and objectives of the movement," said Chief Buthelezi.

"In the past years I have found myself leading Inkatha in the midst of violence vigorously stimulated by the external mission of the ANC and its internal surrogates.

"Many, many members of Inkatha, their families, supporters and their friends and families have lost their lives (in the past three years) and the acts of horror have gone on and on."

The KwaZulu chief minister said he was receiving daily reports of intimidation of Inkatha members throughout Natal/KwaZulu and in the Transvaal.

"I have been told, for instance, that bands of youths are going to schools and homes in Clermont, near Durban, threatening pupils and their parents with death if they support Inkatha. Inkatha has circulated pamphlets and done everything possible to implore members to try to protect each other while not doing anything unlawful," he said.

Chief Buthelezi referrred to a recent statement by an Inkatha official, Mr Samuel Jamile, of Clermont and said it clearly set out what was happening in that area. Mr Jamile is also a member of the KwaZulu legislative assembly.

He said: "The fact is that some people have been brutalised by this horrific violence which has led to counter-violence and so on. Once again I repeat that we must all do something about it because as things stand no leader of any organisation can ensure that no single member or supporter will not be caught up in this violence. This is the tragedy of the situation."

He said as president of Inkatha he was "being constantly asked to comment on violence about which I know absolutely nothing — particulary when it affects UDF members and others."

"And yet, as more and more Inkatha members die, I must now ask whether the press is also asking the leaders of the United Democratic Front and other sources how they explain the deaths of Inkatha members? Is not all life sacred?"

He the mentioned members of Inkatha who had been killed violently. He said he had written to African National Congress president, Mr Oliver Tambo "offering to meet him anywhere to discuss peaceful co-existence. The secretary-general of Inkatha, Dr Oscar Dhlomo, has also communicated to the secretary-general of the ANC, Mr Alfred Nzo, about this matter. We have not had any response. We would have no hesitation in meeting with the leaders of the UDF and have, in the past, attempted to initiate such meetings."

He added: "I want peaceful change. I want non-violence. I want an end to apartheid. I want negotiations leading to power-sharing in a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. This is what the vast majority of black South Africa wants.

"Inkatha does not see itself as the sole organisation representing black South Africa. Inkatha does not begrudge anybody the right to be part of the struggle for our liberation. I have put my cards on the table, is it not time that others did also?" he said.

Party Spokesmen Discuss Natal-KwaZulu Indaba

MB242027 Johannesburg Television Service in English 1830 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Report on separate interviews with Frank Martin, former member of the Executive Committee [MEC] of Natal and convenor of the Indaba; Duncan du Bois, CP spokesman; Ray Swart, PFP MP and party leader in Natal; and Stoffel Botha, minister of home affairs and Natalleader of the National Party, by Freek Robinson on the "Network" program introduced by John Bishop; passages within quotation marks are video recorded]

[Excerpts] [Bishop] As you might know, the KwaZulu-Natal indaba has been described as the most ambitious attempt at integrated regional constitutionmaking in South African history. After representatives from some 40 organizations deliberated for 8 months, a constitution was proposed for Natal and KwaZulu. Well, this envisages the region as a single political unity. Although initially a joint undertaking between the Natal provincial administration and the KwaZulu Government, the proposals have now become strong party political election issue in Natal. So this evening, "Network" brings you four party political views on the proposals. [passage omitted]

Now, the former Natal MEC, Mr Frank Martin, is one of the original conveners of the indaba. Our political correspondent, Freek Robinson, spoke to him earlier today:

[Robinson] "What is your specific strategy in this election? Are you trying to convince the voters of Natal that they actually should opt for the KwaNatal indaba concept or are you still looking at national issues as well?

[Martin] "Obviously, it really (?ties) to national issue. This is a national election, but I think the KwaZulu-Natal concept is one that we in South Africa will have to adopt.

[Robinson] "In what respect?

[Martin] "To sit down around a table and to discuss our problems.

[Robinson] "And your specific view on the success of that?

[Martin] "Well, I think everyone will agree, all South Africans of good sense will agree, that the sooner we can do that, the sooner we are going to come up with a lasting solutions. We cannot go on as we are for much longer.

[Robinson] "One of the particular reasons why the government rejected the proposals of the indaba was that is doesn't really safeguard minority rights. That is what they said. Your response?

[Martin] "Well, that is of course is what they said, but, of course, I don't think they have had the experience of sitting down to negotiate a settlement of problems. If they had, then they wouldn't say that. If you look at the second chamber, 50 percent of the executive committee...[Martin changes thought] Bearing in mind all legislation will be initated by that executive committee, 50 percent are going to be represented by minority parties, and only 50 percent appointed by the majority parties. All legislation that is passed by the executive committee will have to go to standing committee of which no party can have more than 60 percent representation and they need a two-thirds representation to pass any legislation; and then it goes to the second chamber where we have the background group — the English, the Afrikaans, the black, the African rather, and the Asian, and the South Africa group — and anything that affects their language, religion or culture can be vetoed by six people.

[Robinson] "In what manner are you going to test it?

[Martin] "Well, we are hoping for a referendum or an opinion poll, a high-profile opinion poll or referendum, that is what we are hoping for. Whether we get it or not, it depends on the government.

[Robinson] "In the light of the government's rejection of a referendum, how are you going to do it?

[Martin] "I don't know that the government has rejected the referendum. They have said that they are not interested in the referendum now, but on the 6th of May or the 7th of May, they may change their mind.

[Robinson] "Mr Martin, how would you say would the proposals be financed if they are implemented?

[Martin] "How would they be financed? In exactly the same way that the central government has to finance the development of infrastructure right through South Africa. After all, the Louis Rive commission was appointed by the central government to have a look at just these problems in Natal. The (Delia) commission report reported on the whole of South Africa, the disparity between education facilities for blacks and whites. Now these are facts. The government themselves recognize them as facts. They have to be upgraded not only in Natal, but all over South Africa. We highlighted the necessity for doing them in Natal, that is all we have done.

[Robinson] "Well, thank you, Mr Martin.

[Martin] "Thank you."

[Bishp] More than 80 percent of the delegates at the indaba accepted its final proposals unconditionally. The Conservative Party declined an invitation to attend the indaba and have rejected the proposals outright.

[Robinson] "Mr du Bois, welcome to our Network studio from Durban.

[Du Bois] "Thank you.

[Robinson] "Can I first of all ask you what is the Conservative Party's view on the indaba concept as a negotiating forum?

[Du Bois] "The Conservative Party believes that the indaba has created a climate of unfulfillable expectations. To expect to have equal and effective power sharing between 590,000 whites and 5.5 million Zulus is not possible. The Conservative Party believes that white political autonomy is not negotiable and therefore we reject power sharing. We go further and say that Natal, as far the whites are concerned, is not for sale.

[Robinson] "Now, I think you are jumping the gun a bit, Mr du Bois. The question specifically is: the Indaba concept, as a negotiating forum, do you reject the negotiating forum or not?

[Du Bois] "We say that white political autonomy is not negotiable. We will negotiate other things, but you must accept that that is the cornerstone which is not on the table.

[Robinson] "Now, if I understand you correctly, then you don't want to negotiate with blacks about any kind of political solution where they are included with whites?

[Du Bois] "No, that is not correct at all. We accept that you can be economically interdependent but at the end of the day we say there must be statutory independence, such as one sees in Lesotho, Swaziland, and Botswana which are accepted by the international world in spite of the fact that they are fully economically dependent on South Africa.

[Robinson] "Now, following from that, you are prepared to negotiate with blacks, as long as it is on the basis of total partition, is that it?

[Du Bois] "Partition is our policy and each must have his own separate political freedom before you can negotiate.

[Robinson] "All right. Can we come back to the original answer that you gave them and tell us why do you reject the indaba in its constitutional proposals for a shared Natal, KwaNatal?

[Du Bois] "Simply because the Indaba has produced what we might call a contradiction in terms. The Constitution states that there will be a nonracial society. However, if we look at the bill of rights, we see that ethnicity is given some sort of lip service there and how you marry the two together, well, that is their problem. We also have a problem with the land issue in that the land which is currently KwaZulu will remain exclusively for blacks, whereas white- and Indian-owned land in Natal will be opened to all races, which means what is theirs is theirs and what is ours will also be theirs. We found this unacceptable.

[Robinson] "Could you just elaborate specifically on the question of minority rights?

[Du Bois] "Well, the bill of rights which, we are told, this is the kind of sugar-coated pill which is going to protect our rights. The bill of rights is not really worth the paper it is written on because if look at what has happened throughout Africa where they have had bills of right...[Du Bois changes thought] Zimbabwe, the most recent example, 20 whites seats guaranteed by Britain, today the Mugabe government has removed those white seats and where is Britain and its guarantee? So we are not prepared to place our future in the hands of worthless pieces of paper.

[Robinson] "As I understood the concept of the indaba at the time, the whole process was geared for consensus and some kind of give and take in the process, and the Zulus said they gave away the principle that they didn't want to accept minority rights, that they actually conceded that. Now would you go along with that or not?

[Du Bois] "As far as I am aware, the ideas of Gatsha Buthelezi on this are that the whole of Natal is his and he is on record as stating this in his book *Gatsha Buthelezi, Zulu Statesman,* and so, he sees this as a stepping stone and an interim measure leading eventually to one-man, one-vote in the so-called KwaNatal. Now, we reject this because we feel that as a minority group, along with the Indians and the coloreds, our future will be a total zero.

[Robinson] "Following from that, do you think it is feasible then to have the KwaNatal indaba proposal put to vote in a referendum to all the people in KwaNatal?

[Du Bois] "Well, if everyone over the age of 18 has the right to vote as the indaba constitution envisages, then it is a foregone conclusion that the whites would be out outvoted because 590,000 whites to 5.5 million Zulus, you have got the score already. We would rather see in this election that whites vote for the Conservative Party as the only party which is coming up out strongly against the indaba."

[Bishop] During this election campaign, the PFP have been strong supporters of the KwaZulu Natal proposals.

[Robinson] "Good evening, Mr Swart, and welcome to our Network studio from Durban as well. Mr Swart, the government has charged that the PFP, and you in particular, have hijacked the indaba concept for your own political purposes. Your response.

[Swart] "Well, it is a very nice compliment but of course it's absolutely untrue. I was merely 1 of 35 delegations there representing my party; we were 1 of the 35. To suggest that I could have hijacked the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Industry, the trade unions, and all the other organizations simply is not true. This was a consensus decisiontaking at the indaba and no one delegation hijacked any of the others.

[Robinson] "But at the same time it is so that the PFP is making the indaba a specific election issue in Natal and even Chief Gatsha Buthelezi has said that he would advise whites not to use the indaba as an election issue in this particular election.

[Swart] "Well, of course it is not correct that we are making it a political issue in the election. The indaba itself, of course, is involved in a political process but I think it is the Nationalist Party through Minister Stoffel Botha and his rejection of the indaba 48 hours our proposals were made known it's the Nationalist Party that made it an election issue in this particular election.

[Robinson] "Now talking about Mr Stoffel Botha, one of the reasons why he and the government subsequently rejected the indaba concept, actually the proposals as such, was the fact that they thought that it didn't give real minority power or minority protection to groups in Natal.

[Swart] "Well, I think the indaba is a fine example of real power sharing. I think it gives very powerful protections to minority interest groups in Natal. You have got to look at the system of a general franchise which is based on proportional representation, which means that all minority groups will have representation in the assembly as proposed. You have got to look at the composition of the cabinet, which will be composed of half the members appointed by the prime minister and the other half elected by the minority parties. You have got to look at the safeguards given in the second chamber where an interest group, if it thinks that its interest are being adversely affected, has a veto right. You have got to look at the cultural councils, which provide for protection for language and cultural rights of a particular interest groups, and, of course, you can look at the bill of rights which give overall protection to individuals within the Constitution and access to free and independent courts.

[Robinson] "Now I don't think we should labor the point, but I think the specific government charge was that there were no absolute guarantees.

[Swart] "Well, it depends what you mean by an absolute guarantee. This was a constitution which was negotiated in order to find consensus, and I believe that anyone who looks at the constitutional proposals objectively will see that there are very, very adequate guarantees to all minority interest groups within this constitution.

[Robinson] "Mr Swart, just briefly your view on the concept of the indaba as a negotiating forum.

[Swart] "Well, I think where the government has failed hopelessly to get its negotiation process of the ground, the Natal indaba succeeded magnificently albeit at second-tier government level. Don't forget that this was an initiative, a joint initiative, on the part of a black regional government, namely the KwaZulu Government, and I think that is very important, and also the Natal Provincial Council. The indaba representation was a very representative representation, including various interest groups — a wide cross-section of Natal opinion. So I think it was a very good forum to try to seek the sort of solution which we are seeking to the problems of Natal. I think there was a very fine spirit of give and take, there was a fine spirit of compromise. We were looking for consensus and I think that as a negotiation forum, it was a very effective forum indeed.

[Robinson] "Do you still believe that the indaba proposals should be subject to a referandum in Natal?

[Swart] "Oh, yes, undoubtedly they should be subject to a referendum in Natal. After all, the legitimacy of every constitution must be dependent upon the degree of acceptability which it has among the people for which it was designed, and therefore I think ultimately there has got to tbe a referendum including all sections of the community in Natal that they can express and opinion on the proposals.

[Robinson] "Thank you, Mr Swart."

[Bishop] Now the National Party accepted the principle of the indaba and attended its sessions as an obsever. But the National Party leader in Natal, Mr Stoffel Botha, was the first government spokesman to reject the constitutional proposals.

[Botha] "I want to emphasize that I think it was a good thing that the indaba did take place. Negotiation is an ongoing issue that should be conducted at all levels and that is why we supported the indaba to the extent that we were observers and took a keen interest in the happenings there.

[Robinson] "If I understand you correctly, you mean that you reject the proposals but not the concept.

[Botha] "Yes, quite correct. The proposals, the present state of proposals, were taken prematurely. I think it was never intended that a decision be taken at the end of November but for some political reasons, they were taken. Let us take the issue of majority government: In terms of the Natal setup, the proposals will mean that there is a majority government by blacks in Natal, and although an effort is made by using a second chamber, or second house, to protect minority group interests, any analyst would confirm what I say that such protection is completely ineffectual and will in effect not take away the fact that Natal will be governed by a majority, and in view of the fact that the blacks in the town constitute 80 percent of the population of that region, it will be a majority government by the blacks.

[Robinson] "But it has been said as well minister that the mere fact that the Zulus were prepared to accept the principle of building into that proposal the concept of minority rights was in itself a compromise by them.

[Botha] "A compromise must be an effective one. And the protection that is in fact built in really only relates to the religious and cultural rights of the various people in Natal. It most certainly will not enable the minority to effectively participate in the government of KwaZulu Natal. That is the difference between the National Party's viewpoint and that proposed in those proposals, and by the way those proposals are very near to the progressive Party political philosophy. The National Party philosophy says joint powersharing whereby all participants will actively take part in government at the various levels, where there will be measure like vetoes.

[Robinson] "Does that mean that you are only prepared to accept proposals if they are on the terms of the National Party and its policy?

[Botha] "No, not at all, not at all, and that is why I said it is a pity that the negotiations came to an end so abruptly. The National Party is quite prepared to discuss various ways and means of securing structures which will satisfy all the participants, which will give meaningful participation.

[Robinson] "Some people in Natal say: but why did you decide for them? Why don't you put these proposals to the test, put it to the vote in a referendum?

[Botha] "It would be interesting to hear if you go on a referendum whether you go for all the people as a unity. Then, obviously, we will have an 80 percent black vote in a referendum. I confidently believe that if you put this to the group, the white group in Natal, this set of proposals, it will be firmly rejected by the majority and I have a definite idea that the same will apply if it is put to the Indian community. The government is busy with a process of discussion, of negotiation, but that does not take away the fact that at all levels people should persist in this regard. The government in its own right cannot ensure a happy future. It ought to come from the various groups who find accommodation among themselves."

STAR Settles 'Seizure Case,' To Pay Costs

MB241238 Johannesburg SAPA in English 1235 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] Johannesburg March 24 SAPA — *The Star* today settled the "seizure case" in the Rand Supreme Court and agreed to pay costs. Mr S. Kentridge, QC [Queen's Counsel], informed the court this morning that *The Star* had agreed that a temporary order, which prevented the newspaper from being seized on March 10, be withdrawn with costs. This included the costs of two council.

Mr Justice G.A. Coetzee, deputy judge-president, ruled that the temporary order be discharged.

The Star had applied for confirmation of an interim order, granted by Mr Justice O'Donovan on March 10, which declared a Detainees Parents Support Committee advertisement in *The Star* to be legal. A further section of the order prohibited the police from seizing copies of the newspaper carrying the advertisement.

At the close of yesterday's hearing, Mr Justice Coetzee asked Mr Kentridge to explain why the commissioner of police had not been formally notified that *The Star* was bringing the application to court. He said the commissioner's legal advisers had only been informed once the application had been before the court. Mr Justice Coetzee said the right to be heard was one of the most important rights of every person, and it appeared that accepted practice had not been carried out in this case.

He asked why an attorney, Mr Paul Jenkins, had not told Mr Justice O'Donovan what had transpired in a telephone conversation between the police legal adviser and himself while the court was sitting on March 10. Mr Kentridge told the judge Mr Jenkins believed the conversation was an "off the record" discussion between two legal men. Mr Jenkins had been told that the legal advisers intended informing the police that the advertisement was legal. Although Mr Jenkins believed the police would then be told by their lawyers that they could not legally seize the newspaper, the legal advisers had not been prepared to give an undertaking. Argument on this aspect would have been given by Mr Kentridge this morning had the parties not settled.

The hearing of the confirmation of the rule was contested as a matter of urgency by the police. The hearing was interrupted by a refusal of a judge — a matter also contested by the police — and was now in its fourth day. The police case still had to presented to the court.

One of the issues was whether *The Star* was justified in seeking an urgent court order restraining the police from confiscating the newspaper. Two security policemen had presented an order authorising seizure if the issue contained a specified advertisement on National Detainee Day. When the advertisement was not precisely in the form they had anticipated, they left to seek further instructions.

Counsel for the commissioner of police were prevented from giving their side of the case because they had not begun their argument before the case was settled. However, elements of the police side of the story were contained in affidavits before the court.

In his affidavit, the commissioner of police, General Petrus Johannes Coetzee, said *The Star* had nothing to fear. He said the police had no intention of seizing *The Star*.

Malan Acknowledges Validity of Black Aspirations

MB250617 Johannesburg SAPA in English 2304 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Ventersdorp, March 24, SAPA — If the political aspirations of blacks were not met, they would pushed into the arms of the African National Congress, the minister of defence, General Magnus Malan, said tonight.

Addressing an election meeting in the town hall here attended by about 150 people, Gen Malan said the National Party government realised the real need to meet these blacks aspirations and was prepared to negotiate future structures with them.

If the black man was "pushed away", as some political parties proposed, "he will be pushed straight into the arms of the ANC terrorists and a blow will be struck against South Africa's counter-attack to the revolutionary onslaught."

The voters would have to decide on May 6 whether other political parties could fulfil the role the NP filled at present and was prepared to fill in future.

General Malan said the NP government was prepared to give blacks, more particularly the five million or so urban blacks, full political participation in a future South Africa on the same basis whites, coloureds and Indians had now.

The reason the coloured and Indians population groups could not be infiltrated by the Communists and terrorists was that they already had this participation "but the black man is not involved yet".

General Malan said most urban blacks had no ties to the homelands whatsoever and that if these were forced and the people shifted back to these areas, "we will lose the revolutionary war."

Critical factors that the government had to address in the counter-revolutionary war were security to ensure freedom from intimidation; efficient black local authority functioning; provision of housing; countering unemployment and upgrading education. "The NP knows these challenges and can change them into opportunities ....This is the choice before the voters." Gen Malan said.

Outlining the NP's request for a mandate to negotiate with the blacks, the minister said there were a number of non-negotiables or "rules of the game" which would have to be observed. The basic departure point had to be the ensuring of group security and self-determination for the country's various communities. All South Africans had to be able to take part in the negotiations, through their representatives and there could be "no interference from outside", while all participants had to foreswear violence.

Other norms which would have to be adhered to were equality before the law and an independent judiciary; freedom of religion and speech according to civilised Christian norms; maintenance of the sovereignty of South Africa and law and order; the promotion of free enterprise along capitalist lines to the exclusion of Marxism; and the removal of all discrimination.

On this basis, General Malan said, participants in negotiations on the future could gather around the table.

He emphasised that it was not for the NP at this stage to "show its cards" in the negotiation game and say what its blueprint was.

If the negotiations resulted in "drastic changes" the government would come back to the voters for approval in the form of either an election or a referendum.

"With this political reform we will win the revolutionary war politically, through the participation by all in a South Africa of the future."

De Klerk Sees Need For Power Sharing With Blacks

MB250621 Johannesburg SAPA in English 0003 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Secunda, March 24, SAPA — The denial of a political power base to the 10 million blacks who live outside the national states would drive those who sought peaceful change into the hands of revolutionaries, the minister of national education, Mr

F.W. de Klerk, said tonight.

Speaking at an election meeting of about 400 people in a school hall here, the leader of the Transvaal National Party said there were blacks who had lived in South Africa all their lives and they and their children would remain here.

As a group they would have to be given a political power base and legislative assemblies to determine their own community lives.

The exact nature of the structures for blacks would have to be negotiated, but once this had been achieved, the political problems of South Africa would have been solved.

He said it would be necessary to include blacks in power-sharing and joint decision making on matters of common interest to escape the accusation that the government was dominating blacks.

"We will have to find a way to share power so that a balance is maintained and the majority does not force its will on the minority."

Mr de Klerk said there were different concepts of power-sharing. But "Prog [PFP] power-sharing" would not work as it did not take account of group security or of the force of the majority.

Consensus would have to be reached and a mechanism for dealing with deadlocks would have to be devised. It would not be a question of counting heads or putting it to the majority vote.

Blacks outside the national states could not stay in South Africa year after year without political representation. Trying to keep them under thumb would drive them into the hands of the revolutionaries and the ANC.

He said there were moderate blacks of good will who were faced with daily propaganda to become violent. A system had to be devised which would make it worthwhile for those who favoured peaceful change.

Mr de Klerk said the government was seeking a mandate to negotiate this framework with blacks but before any major changes were made to the Constitution they would go back to the electorate.

KwaZulu Cabinet Meets Portuguese Delegation

MB240736 Johannesburg International Service in English 0630 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] A senior Portuguese Government delegation has held talks with the cabinet of the South African national state of KwaZulu in Ulundi. The deputy secretary of the ruling Portuguese Social Democratic Party, Mr Luis Geraldes, said afterwards that his government, as a member of the EEC, believed there was a need for reform in South Africa. He said those who have the interests of South Africa at heart should be allowed to take part in the evolutionary process.

Also speaking after the talks, KwaZulu's chief minister, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, said the future of South Africa had to be determined by the country's people and not by the prescriptions of the East or the West. However, he said he believed Portugal had a supportive role to play for the forces of democracy in South Africa.

ANC's Sebina Denies Plans To Halt Armed Struggle

MB241829 Lusaka Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The African National Congress said in Lusaka today that it has no plans to stop or renounce armed struggle against the South African Government because that government is full of repression. A spokesman for the liberation movement, Tom Sebina, said although Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu who was in the country over the weekend had appealed to the ANC to temporarily stop violence, it has no plans to do so. He said the ANC is fighting a violent regime that has continuously used violence against defenseless people and therefore had to be met with violence. Comrade Sebina was reacting to reports from Johannesburg purported to have been made by Archbishop Tutu which said he had appealed to the ANC leadership to halt their armed struggle in South Africa. The spokesman in Lusaka said there is no question for a cease-fire or a halt to the armed struggle. He said the halting of armed struggle would render the people of South Africa defenseless under the Botha regime.

Information Bureau Issues 24 Mar Unrest Report

MB250841 Johannesburg SAPA in English 0814 GMT 25 Mar 87

[Text] Pretoria, March 25, SAPA — The Bureau for Information's unrest report for the period 0001 to 2400 March 24:

"A group of about 50 black persons, who were part of a larger group of strikers at the City Deep railway depot in Johannesburg, threw stones at a private vehicle yesterday causing damage estimated at about R2000. No injuries or arrests were reported.

"An unidentified person fired a shot at a security force vehicle in Tantyi (Grahamstown) yesterday. No injuries, arrests or damages were reported.

"Two black men threw a petrol bomb at a private home in the black township of Bethal yesterday. No injuries, arrest or damages were reported."

Press Comments on Current Issues, Problems

MB250647 [Editorial Report]

CITIZEN on Group Areas Act

"We hope the Group Areas Act will not become a damaging election issue," says Johannesburg *The Citizen* in English on 24 March in its page 6 editorial. "Damaging in the sense that at a time when there is a decided need for signals of more and quicker reform, any clampdown over group areas would suggest the government is digging in its heels instead." "Group areas are no longer a holy cow, anymore than the Mixed Marriages Act and Section 16 of the Immorality Act were holy cows before they were repealed." "As a newspaper, we do not advocate the wholesale scrapping of the Act at this point, since this would pose tremendous problems outside the places in which mixed residential areas have developed almost naturally. But that there should be local option, allowing for grey areas, seems to be the best way out of the dilemma."

STAR on Group Areas

"Infringement of the Group Areas Act may be breaches of the law, but efforts to stage a crackdown ahead of the election will be seen for what it is: political opportunism," notes a page 8 editorial in Johannesburg *The Star* in English on 24 March. "Until the Government has thoroughly reviewed the Act, which even President Botha has indicated needs amending, no worthy purpose can be served by upsetting ordinary people struggling with so many other problems. The use of naked racial bigotry is one more example of the barrenness of real policies. The election slogan 'Apartheid is dead...long live Apartheid' may cover the NP's thin flanks; but it is very, very sad for the country as a whole."

Blacks 'Anxious' To End Rent Issue

Rich Mkhondo writes on the same page that Soweto residents "are anxious for an end to the rents impasse." "In a survey conducted by *The Star* last week residents said they were worried about the accumulation of debts and wished the authorities and community organisations would resolve the issue by treating the residents' demands as a matter of utmost urgency." "Residents have not been paying rent since June last year. Their demands include the removal of soldiers from the townships, the resignation of all councillors, the unbanning of 'people's' organisations, the release of detainees and political prisoners and the lifting of the emergency decrees." But Soweto town clerk, Nico Malan, says that "although the council was running at a loss, it was not bankrupt." Malan points out that the payment of rent has improved by 50 percent.

BUSINESS DAY on Economy as Political Issue

A page 6 editorial in Johannesburg *Business Day* in English on 24 March says: "The Margo Commission's report, handed to government last week but not made public, hangs over all debate on questions of tax, economic stimulation, allocation of resources, and much else; which is no way for a nation to conduct an election campaign in which economic questions loom large." "The imposition of the RSC [Regional Services Council] bureaucracy and tax system in advance of the publication of the Margo report is another manifestation of the thinking that imposed segregation on graveyards, marriages, scientific societies and sports teams when all the world was crying out warnings about the folly of it. Once again, political conviction is permitted to override economic evidence, as though there were no cost to defying the laws of economics."

CAPE TIMES on State Wage Increases

"So much for President Botha's good intentions on streamlining the civil service and the State bureaucracy," notes a page 4 editorial in Cape Town *Cape Times* in English on 23 March. "Figures released by the Central Statistical Service shows the State's wage bill increased by 26 percent to R3.3 billion in the final quarter of last year compared with the similar quarter in the previous year. Most of the increase was made up by pay rises since the number of civil servants increased by only 4.4 percent. Still, this rise was enough to bring total staff employed by central and local government, the self-governing homelands and statutory bodies to 1,075,041." "That does not bode well for the privatization policy, which means big government will get bigger, and still more expensive."

SOWETAN on May Holiday

"The Government might have thought it was striking a compromise by making the first Friday in May a public holiday instead of the traditional May 1, which is recognised by workers throughout the world," says Johannesburg *Sowetan* in English on 24 March in its page 6 editorial. "Too often the Government has the gnawing feeling that every recognition of the people's rights is or might be perceived as a sign of weakness from it. On the contrary, it is a strong government that is willing to meet demands made by the people and continue to exercise control." "The Government must have the courage of its convictions. If it believes that making a stand will be in the interests of the country as a whole, it must make the decision. It must stop looking over its shoulder, and all over the show, lest it falls into an imagined trap. The strong act would have been to recognise May Day as a legitimate workers' day and a paid holiday and get the hassle out of the way. Now the hassle factor has been multiplied."

Greater Stability in Black Schools

"Stability, apart from a few isolated exceptions, was the feature of the first quarter at black schools in South Africa in 1987, according to the Department of Education and Training," writes the *Sowetan* correspondent on the same page in the "Focus" column. A spokesman for the Department of Education and Training, Peter Mundell, says there has been "a very fundamental change in attitudes. 'Parents are playing a more prominent role and there is a strong feeling in the community that schools must play a bigger part. Pupils, too, have realised that they have nothing to show after two years of boycotts and have returned to school.'" However, the correspondent also says that "few, if any, of the pupil demands have been met, a factor which still riles a significant number of them."

TRANSVALER: Politics, Economy Interwoven

A page 14 editorial in Pretoria *Die Transvaler* in Afrikaans on 23 March says politics and economics are "interwoven in such a way that developments and setbacks in one seriously affects the other." "A country which is faced with an unhealthy economy and political unrest, and cannot deal with both successfully, will most certainly have to determine its priorities." However, the paper regards the political issue to be the most urgent one in the country at the moment. "There is the opportunity to guarantee peace through negotiation but time is diminishing. In the meantime it is vital that law and order be firmly maintained, as well as maintaining a sound economy. These obligations rest mainly on the shoulders of the government."

BEELD on Tutu Appeals to ANC

"It is praiseworthy of Archbishop Desmond Tutu to call on the ANC to renounce violence and to strive for a negotiated settlement," says a page 18 editorial in Johannesburg *Beeld* in Afrikaans on 24 March. But "why did he wait until so much blood has been shed and so many innocent people have died? Why did he wait until the ANC and other revolutionary organizations could see clearly that through terrorism and violence South Africa will not fall like a ripe apple into their lap?" The editorial further says that the "firm grip which Moscow has on the ANC leadership is menacing for people who value democratic freedom, and especially religious freedom."

ZAMBIA

Kaunda Sees 'Misinterpretation' of ANC Struggle

MB231856 Lusaka Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] President Kaunda today expressed concern over the misinterpretation by South Africa and its allies of the ANC's decision to use arms in its liberation struggle. Speaking before he met the Socialist International Contact Group for Southern Africa, the president said it was important that the ANC and SWAPO's decision to use armed struggle is clearly understood. Saying he was very concerned about the misinterpretation brought through the use or armed force by liberation movements in southern Africa, the president said his views are very clear on the matter. The Socialist International, which has been meeting in Lusaka for the past 2 days, has unanimously condemned the brutal system of apartheid which they said must be completely eliminated.

ZIMBABWE

Mugabe Returns From Pakistan Anniversary Visit

MB240712 Harare Domestic Service in English
0600 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The prime minister, Comrade Robert Mugabe, arrived back in Harare today from Pakistan where he attended Pakistan's 40th independence anniversary celebrations. During his stay in that country, Comrade Mugabe received Pakistan's highest civil award, the (Shami Qaide Azam), in recognition of his significant contributions to world peace and progress. Comrade Mugabe is the first leader to receive the award from General Ziaul Haq, the Pakistan president, in the capital Islamabad, with some foreign nationals and members of the Pakistan Armed Forces who were also decorated for the outstanding performances.

Speaking to newsmen shortly before his departure from Islamabad International Airport, Comrade Mugabe described as very useful the talks he had had with the Pakistan prime minister, Mr Mohammad Khan Junejo. The two leaders, he said, discussed a wide range of bilateral issues, also the role of the Nonaligned Movement and what it can play in solving regional conflicts. Comrade Mugabe stressed that as chairman of the movement, he is seriously concerned with regional and international conflicts threatening world peace. He pointed out that man would like to ensure that (?conflicts) are brought to an end through peaceful negotiations. Comrade Mugabe expressed satisfaction at Indo-Pakistan relations, which he said have improved considerably following the negotiations between the two countries.

Mangwende Receives Nicaraguan Counterpart

MB231728 Harare Domestic Service in English
1600 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Text] A call has been made on the United States of America to protect and defend international law. The minister of foreign affairs, Comrade Witness Mangwende, told his visiting Nicaraguan counterpart, Comrade Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, that as a superpower the United States should not be involved in acts of destabilization. He said Zimbabwe believed that the Nicaraguans will win the war against the American-backed bandits, adding that they have no call to fight against the Sandinista government of President Daniel Ortega. Comrade Mangwende expressed the hope that the Americans would desist in supporting countries that are fighting against peace and stability.

D'Escoto Meets Canaan Banana

MB241221 Harare Domestic Service in English
1115 GMT 24 Mar 87

[Text] The Nicaraguan foreign minister, Comrade Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, today visited Heroes Acre in Harare, where he laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Comrade Brockman was accompanied by the Nicaraguan ambassador to Zimbabwe, Comrade David McField, and senior government officials. Later, he paid a courtesy call on the president, Comrade Canaan Banana, at State House.